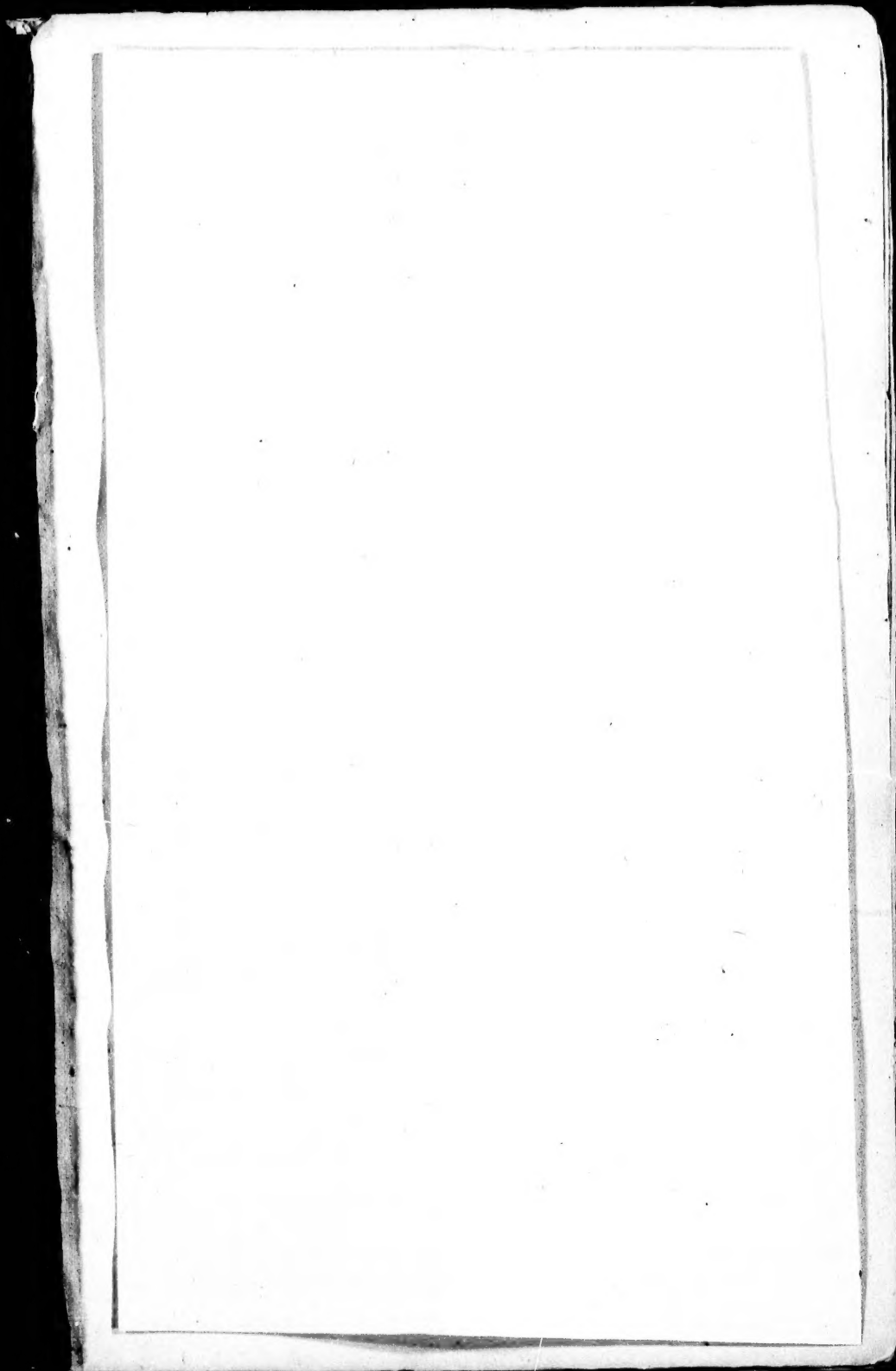
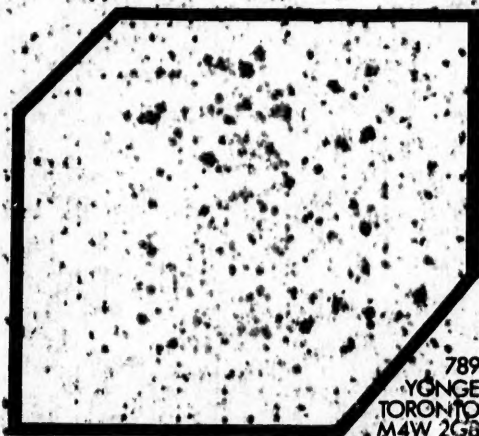




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LETTERS
FROM
JOHN GWYNN SWAIN,
TO
HIS MOTHER.

WRITTEN ON HIS ENTRANCE INTO LIFE:
AGED SEVENTEEN.

GIVING A DESCRIPTION OF HIS VOYAGE TO CANADA
AND ADVENTURES AT LAKE SUPERIOR.

PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION.

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LETTERS.

ON BOARD THE ST. GEORGE,
5th June 1867.

MY DARLING MOTHER.—I am all right here at Greenock; saw Mrs Sturrock, she came and saw me off. I met my American cousin by chance, he saw me off too. We start to-morrow at 12. I have a good berth. Hugh Gibson and I have it between us.

I got a letter from my aunt to-day here. I have no time to say more. Hope grandfather is improving. Love to all. I am just going on shore in the boat to post this. Good-bye.—I am your loving son,

JOHNNIE.

6th June 1867.

GREENOCK, "ST. GEORGE," 9 A.M.

MY OWN DEAR MOTHER—I have just made a capital breakfast, as the sea air gives one a good appetite, and as the captain is going ashore this morning I knew how glad you would be to get a line from me. The berths are far more comfortable for sleeping than I thought. I never woke once all night. I have got my luggage all in my bunk, and so has Hugh, so we have

everything at hand. The cabin passengers join us here at 12 o'clock, as we are almost the only ones that *slept* on board. We start at one to-day, and don't stop till we reach St Johns, Newfoundland, where I will write you, so you will get a letter sooner than I expected. I hope you read my last night's note to grandfather, it would cheer him. Love to all, not forgetting Topsy.* Good-bye. God bless you. I am all right.—Ever your loving son.

JOHNNIE.

LETTER No. I.

BEGAN ON BOARD THE S. S. "ST. GEORGE."

12th June 1867.

Mrs E. SWAIN, Edinburgh.

MY OWN DEAR, DEAR MOTHER.—Here I am, going to write you my first letter in the saloon of the "St George," more than 1000 miles from the nearest land, and in the middle of the deep Atlantic; but if I go on in this style, I shall never get any news told to you, so I must drop it and begin in earnest. When I got to Glasgow, Hugh Gibson was waiting at the station, and I promised to meet him in half an hour at the hotel his mother and he were staying at. In the meantime, Fred Jockel called a cab and got my luggage stowed, and away we drove for Mrs Sturrock's shop; she was not in, but at the house; so I went up and found her just going out. We then went and saw Hugh's mother, who was in a *dreadful state*, which I considered very foolish; from there we went back to the shop, and then to Mr Thyne's,

* A pet dog.

who, I am sorry to say, was from home. As I was standing at Thyne's counter, who should come in but my "American Cousin;" we were both delighted, so he says to me, "Where are you going?" Says I, "Canada, at one o'clock;" he was thunderstruck—of course he jumped into the cab and saw me off. I called at Mr Bell's shop and got the promised letters, and then away we went for the "Mavis Bank Wharf," which we reached about half-past 12.

Such a crowd of people were there, all crying and roaring at an awful rate. I found Gibson and his mother waiting, also Willie Sturrock, Mr Forrester, Mrs Sturrock, and little Isabella; we went on board and saw the captain, and got our luggage all stowed away in our room; by this time the steam was getting up, so all went on shore but Hugh and I, who ran on shore afterwards and shook hands with all our friends; we had just time to hurry on board when the ropes were cast off, the screw revolved, and we found ourselves slowly drawing away from the quay; then wasn't there a hullabaloo, about nine hundred people or more all shouting, crying, hurrahing, and waving their hats and handkerchiefs; Hugh and I jumped on the stern, and waved our caps, and kissed our hands till the dear faces we knew so well were no longer in sight, and then for the first time we felt the loneliness of our situation. We had dinner, and got to Greenock about 3 p.m., where we stayed all night. To our great astonishment a note came on board to say that Hugh's mother had come down and was in the town, so we agreed that *I* should go to her and not *himself*, as he did not wish to see her again. Away we rushed down to the cabin, and scribbled two notes, he to his mother

and I to you, as of course I knew how glad you would be to hear from me, and then I got into the boat, and came on shore (a distance of about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles). I saw Mr Younger, and posted your note, and left, getting to the ship about 9 p.m.

We went to our bunks early and slept well, as we were tired; by the by these same bunks are very comfortable, and I slept as well as if I had been in my own little room at home. Next morning we got up to shoot gulls, of which we shot nine during the day. At 12 o'clock the tug came alongside with those passengers who chose to join at Greenock, and it also brought Mr Younger to say a last farewell to Hugh, a thing which annoyed us both very much, even the captain remarked it. We started in earnest about 1 p.m., and steamed off down the Clyde, passing the "Kyles of Bute," "Goatfell," "Ailsa Craig," and lastly, the "Mull of Cantyre,"—this is one of the roughest parts on the Scottish coast, and as there was a high, chopping sea running, we got plenty of tossing, and *then began a scene.* Now I am going to tell you something you may find hard to believe, and that is, that *neither Hugh nor I have been the LEAST SICK*; this is not said as an exaggeration, but is, I assure you, perfectly true. The first day we were at sea both of us felt heavy and out of sorts, but never the slightest sick, nor confined to our rooms even for one hour. How to account for this I don't know, but the captain told us we were the *only* passengers on board that were not ill. To return to my subject, the above mentioned "*scene*" was, the steerage passengers lying like pigs vomiting in all directions, over each other and under each other, and indeed *everywhere*. That

night (Thursday 6th) the sounds I heard were awful. The steerage is right under the cabin, and consequently when lying in our bunks, and all quiet, you heard with the greatest distinctness. The retching was frightful, not fetching anything up, but "belching" all night long, and the poor babies (of whom there are an immense number) were crying most piteously, of course their mothers were all too ill to attend to them. I was driven half "daft," and didn't know where to go to get away from the noise; however, I managed to keep all right by thinking about it as little as possible. On Friday morning when I went on deck (as I was the only one well enough) there was no land to be seen, nothing but sea, sea, sea, on every side, and as it was rough, the huge Atlantic waves came in at an awful pace, and kept us rocking and pitching all day, and as it was my first time *really at sea*, I could not help a solemn awe and reverence stealing over me at the wondrous works of the Creator, and feeling how small and insignificant I was (and even the ship) compared with that mighty deep which lay stretched before me. Captain Smith is a splendid gentleman, and gives us lots of fun. We have got a gymnastic apparatus rigged up on the quarter-deck, which allows us plenty of exercise, also lots of games peculiar to a ship, which are no use telling you, as you would not know the meaning of the names, or how they are played. We had a concert on Monday night, which went off splendidly; the steerage passengers were called into the cabin, and the performance began at 7 o'clock. There were two violins, and a guitar which the doctor of the ship plays beautifully. I sang the first song, which was my old favourite one of "Alonzo." I was dressed in a

most absurd manner, and caused roars of laughter and lots of applause. I also sang "Dublin Bay," and the "London, Chatham, and Dover." Captain Smith and the doctor are both good singers, and gave us some fine melodies. Last night (Thursday 13th) we had a dancing party on deck, where I again distinguished myself in dancing Scotch reels and Irish jigs, much to the delight of the passengers, who are mostly English. We have had rather a bad voyage, for until these last two days, there has been nothing but head winds and heavy seas, making the ship roll horribly, and of course retarding our course considerably. I can assure you the waves of the Atlantic and the waves of the Forth are two very different affairs. It is great fun dressing, and I often lie in my bunk and laugh like to burst myself at Hugh, as he always gets up before me, there being no room for two to dress at once. Perhaps he will be drawing on his trousers, when a sudden lurch of the ship precipitates him among the trunks, and his trousers most likely in the wash-hand basin, or some place equally ridiculous; then again, washing yourself, very likely half the water is thrown over your legs, much to your discomfiture, and your friend's amusement. We had English service and sermon from the captain on Sunday morning in the cabin, which office he fulfils most satisfactorily. We have had two deaths on board, of two children, caused by natural debility and a very severe attack of sea-sickness, which affected their brain and caused fits: the one was a baby and the other a fine boy of six years. It was indeed a solemn ceremony the burial. The captain and officers are all full dressed, and the former reads the burial service. The corpse is sewn up in sailcloth,

loaded with shot, a flag (Union Jack) is over all, it is then put on a board, and is then shot into the water through one of the port-holes. There never has been a death on board this ship before, so it was a new and solemn duty the captain had to perform. I felt very much for the poor mothers, and went to my room and thanked my Maker for preserving me. There are some nice gentlemen on board, officers, &c., and we have lots of fencing, boxing, &c. I have made the acquaintance of a young farmer whom the captain introduced to me, and have promised to visit him, as he lives close to Toronto, with his mother and family, on a large farm of his own. We will reach St Johns, Newfoundland, to-morrow, where we are to get on shore to see the town, &c. I shan't post this letter there, as it gets to you no quicker, but wait till I reach Quebec, which will be Tuesday or Wednesday, and then I will have more to tell you. I trust poor dear old grandfather is keeping cheery. Tell him there are a couple here on board, the old gentleman is 87 and the old lady close on 80. They are going out to spend the *fiftieth anniversary of their marriage* with their family; *so surely there is hope for him yet.* Ditto for the "old woman" who takes snuff, &c., at 4 Albyn Place, Edinburgh. The postage of this thick paper will cost me *more* I know; but I don't mind, as I want you to keep all my letters perfectly clean, and get them neatly bound, as I am writing as nicely as possible for that purpose. Mr McKie will kindly check all my errors very neatly and small, as my letters are too long to read over twice by the writer, then I will have something to look back upon. The other evening the moon was shining beautifully, and I really could not

go to bed; all went to bed but me, so I walked the quarter-deck and conversed with the officer on watch all night, being determined to see sunrise, as well as sunset, on the Atlantic. The first tints of dawn began to show themselves about 1 o'clock, and it gradually got lighter till half past 3 a.m., when I noticed a certain point in the horizon become a golden hue. *There* I fixed my eyes, and in a few minutes they were greeted with that which was indeed a lovely sight. The sun rose slowly, bit by bit, till it was clear of the horizon, then up it shot like a ball of *white hot* iron; the first officer said he never saw a finer morning, as the sky is generally clouded; so I was lucky. When I told them all at breakfast in the morning, they were every one of them angry at themselves for not staying up, as it is very unlikely the same thing will happen again this voyage, for although we often see a glorious sunset, it is very seldom a fine sunrise. To-day (Saturday 15th) I witnessed that curious phenomenon called mirage—ask Mr M'Kie and he will tell you all about it; you would have sworn you saw rocks in the distance, with the waves breaking over them, whereas when we got up it was nothing. Land came in sight about 4 o'clock this afternoon (Saturday) and we reached St John's, Newfoundland, about 7 p.m. I rushed away and dressed myself after tea, and six of us made up a party to go on shore, as we had got leave from the Captain till 12 o'clock. When I put my foot on the ground I felt very queer, as I missed the rocking of the ship, and it also was the first foreign soil my foot had touched, and that caused peculiar thoughts and sensations to pass through me. There is nothing peculiar about the town nor people;

their shops are the same as ours, *except the prices*, which are *very different*, and the fashion of their clothes, which is a little behind ours, but not much. I noticed they all wear "hoops" here, and very large ones too. We (the Captain and I) went to the English Cathedral this morning (Sunday) where there was a splendid service, as they happened to be ordaining two young priests by the Bishop, and as I never saw it before, it was very interesting to me. They have a very fine choir and organ, and the interior of the edifice is very much after the style of Ludlow Church, as represented by my grandfather. We left "St Johns" the same afternoon, and steamed away for the St Lawrence; it came on one of those nasty fogs, so dangerous and only too common to the coast. You could not see ten yards before you. The ship had to stop for four hours during the night in consequence of it. In the course of the next day I saw five icebergs, which are very fine sights, but unfortunately we were not close enough to get a proper look at them, but they were very large. There are two very nice young ladies on board, and we have had another concert and lots of dancing, and I assure you I will be very sorry to leave the "St George," for I have got so accustomed to the regular life we lead. I feel extremely well and strong, and a vast deal better for my sea cruise. I have got a splendid colour, and am already greatly improved. Last night (Wednesday 19th) I witnessed a splendid sight, namely, the "Aurora Borealis" or "Northern lights;" there was a large arch in the heavens, and the whole was one mass of light,—green, purple, and yellow, changing continually, and presenting a gorgeous spectacle to the eye. I also saw the Canadian woods

on fire, which is caused by the beating of the sun upon the old grass and leaves of the previous year; there is not much flame, but a huge quantity of smoke, which keeps smouldering for miles, and seldom bursts into a conflagration. This is Thursday morning, and we are in the splendid river St Lawrence; the pilot has just come on board, and the captain expects to reach Quebec about 5 a.m. to-morrow morning, and as the mail does not leave till Saturday, I will be able to tell you about that city and its environs before I post this epistle. Have you heard from Mary since her marriage? how is she getting on in her new capacity? If all goes well I will reach Toronto about the middle or end of next week, and will then be able to tell you all about Stewart. I don't know how the Toronto mails are managed, but you will receive a letter from me, at most, ten days or a fortnight after this reaches 4 Albyn Place. I trust you got my "Cartes" all right. I want you to get an extra dozen of each, as it is the only one you have got of me, that is, like me as I am now; and it would be a pity to run short of them, because I will want some sent out, besides some to keep for my own album after I return home. I hope you will attend to this. If you ask Freddy he will order them for you, they are only two shillings a dozen. Be sure and keep all the things I left in your care, and the things in my house, as I shall expect to find them *all* afterwards. I forgot to tell you my knapsack is in the recess under my bedroom window; put it carefully away for me. I wish I had brought all my photographic stuff I left with you, with me, as I am told it is double the price in Canada. If you find a Merchaum pipe anywhere, give

it to Freddy, as it is his. I lost it the day before I left. If this is not written so neatly as it might be, excuse it, and remember the ship is pitching all the time. Let Freddy see this letter, be sure; also any of our friends you think proper, but take great care and keep it scrupulously clean. Of course you will send it to Aunt Hannah, and Mrs Baldwin, and poor dear old Granny, as I can't write to them till I am settled; but this will answer the very same purpose. I shall write just a line to the "Serjeant-Major" to tell him I am all right, as I know how gratified he will be. I suppose you have written to me ere this, so your letter will be waiting at Toronto for my arrival. I do trust my poor dear old grandfather is keeping well, as it is my fondest wish to see him when I return, and tell him I have prayed for his life and health every night and morning since I left home. Also be sure and read him the interesting parts of this letter. Give my fondest love to dear old aunty, and tell her I often think of the rows we have had, and my cocoa, and bread and butter suppers. The grub, attendance, and accommodation on board ship is first class, as we have the best of everything to eat and drink, and plenty of fine water.

(Friday 21st.) Reached Quebec this morning, and what do you think, I slept so sound that the firing of the guns did not awaken me, and the consequence was, that I was carried away to Montreal, so I have got to go back. However, it is only a short distance. And now, my dear mother, I must draw my letter to a close, not that I have said *half* I would like to say, but, as I have given you a full description of my sail across the Atlantic, it will be better to keep my notes on Canada till my

next. Remember me to Mrs Lock, and tell her the *next* pair of trousers she mends for me, *not* to put WIRE *all along the bottoms*. There are a great many more messages and remarks I was going to send you, but I cannot remember them at present, so will reserve them till next. Be sure and let Mr Brown see this, and give him my fondest regards, and tell him to remember me to the Skirvings. Give my love to the Stewarts, and Duncans, and the Jockels. I hope you have seen Mr Younger since we left. If you don't write great long letters you will catch it. Write to the Serjeant-Major; I have done so. Give my fondest love to Grandfather, Aunt, Mr McKie, Charlie,* and dear little Topsy, and forgive me if I have forgotten anyone whom I should have sent kind wishes to. May God bless and keep you and all at home, is the earnest prayer of your ever loving son.

JOHN SWAIN.

Finished at Montreal, Monday, 24th June 1867.

LETTER No. II.

153 ADELAIDE STREET, TORONTO,
PROVINCE OF ONTARIO, CANADA.

July 4th, 1867.

Mrs E. SWAIN, Edinburgh.

MY OWN DEAR MOTHER,—I received my letters on the 2nd inst., and they contained sad news indeed;† however, I was quite prepared for it, as I saw before I left home he could not last long. But, my dear mother, let

* A big dog.

† His grandfather's death.

us trust he has gone to a better world, and that we will all be united there. You know he has lived over man's allotted time, and that he was fast becoming both a burden to himself, and to those around him.

I think my last epistle stopped at Montreal. Well, we there went to the "Albion Hotel" and saw a little of Yankee style. The first thing you do is to go up to the "hotel clerk" (there is no master to receive you) and register your name, then he gives you a key and sends a man with your luggage up to your room (No. 63) where we gave ourselves a good wash, and prepared to look about us. Montreal is a very fine city, and is justly termed the "Emporium of the West"; there are a great many beautiful buildings and streets in it. I have got pictures of the principal ones, which I hope to show you some day, but the postage is too much to send them; besides they will be none the worse for keeping. The meal hours at the "Albion" are 8 a.m., 1 p.m., and 6 p.m.; the grub is first class; you get everything in season. All dine in one large hall, containing about twenty tables to accommodate twelve each. There are no dishes on the table, but everything is brought to you in very small pie dishes, of which you have six or eight round you. The attendance is excellent; there being about three waitresses to each table. There is a hair cutter and shaver attached to the establishment, and splendid easy American chairs to lie on, with high rest for your legs; so you see everything here is done with an eye to comfort. The charge is 6s. a day, including room, attendance, lights, and *everything*; we can't do it for that at home.

While I was there it happened to be a grand high

Catholic day; so I saw the procession in all its magnificence of Papal grandeur. The Catholic Cathedral (Notre Dame) is a very imposing edifice, but does not come up to the Jesuit's church, which is *one mass of gold and paintings*; it must have cost a vast deal of money. On Sunday (23d) we went to the English Cathedral, which is a very fine building, and where we heard a capital sermon. One thing struck me, the people go in and out as they choose all the service; I suppose it is owing to the heat.

I called at the bank and saw Mr Angus, the gentleman Mr Spence gave me a letter to, he was very kind to me; also Mr Mackenna (Mr Cathcart's friend) he was excessively good, and took me round about a dozen offices; but I got no *advantageous* offers, although I got some. I here met some of my old Edinburgh acquaintances, and we had a jovial meeting, as of course it was unexpected, and they were delighted to see us or anyone from the "Old Country."

I was very nearly getting into the Hudson Bay Company, but thought you would not like it, as I would have been sent far up into the interior, and would have seen no one but Indians from years end to years end, except perhaps an occasional trapper.

On Monday (24th) I took the river boat and started for Quebec, as I told you I missed it on my road up. These river steamers are like floating houses, and the saloons are fitted up in a most luxurious manner, everyone having a piano, on which I had several tunes; the charge is 4s. including tea and bed, as it takes about ten hours to go down. We arrived about 6 a.m., so after getting breakfast I went up to the Citadel, where I had a

magnificent view, as it stands very high; the walls are *twenty-two feet thick*, and all mounted with Armstrong guns. I then took a cab and went to Montmorenzi Falls (of which you saw a view at the Panorama), the cabs by the way are very different from ours, being all open to let in the air, and only a leather top. The falls are very fine, being the highest known (240 feet); the water comes down with tremendous force, and there is a continual rainbow at the bottom, besides an eternal shower and cloud of mist and spray, which forms that peculiar cone in the winter which "Friend" described. I wrote my name and address in a large bold hand in the Visitor's book, so whoever visits it that knows me, can't fail to notice it. I then went round the famous plains of Abraham, and saw the monument on the spot where Wolfe, the great general, fell. I also visited the scene of the dreadful fire which you remember happened last year, and indeed it must have been a fearful sight, as the place is still a desolation for more than half a mile. I delivered my letters there, but there was nothing to do, and I can tell you I was not sorry, as it is a dirty little hole. I returned by the "cars" the same night to Montreal; these cars are as different from *our* railway carriages as night from day. The doors are at each *end*, and you can walk the whole length of the train at will; there are *sleeping* cars on each line, where you rest as comfortably as if you were in an hotel; the charge is only 1d per mile *first class*. I crossed the famous "Victoria Tubular Bridge," which is indeed a wonderful structure, and may well be termed one of the seven wonders of the world.

I left Montreal on Friday night (28th) and reached

Toronto on Saturday morning, passing on the way the famous La Chine Rapids. I immediately proceeded to Mr Stewart's, who gave me a very warm welcome, and got me my present lodgings, which are just opposite his house. I am extremely comfortable, and the grub is excellent. The charge is, *only fancy, just* 12s. a week, and 4s. a month for washing. I could not get the same accommodation at home for £1. Breakfast is at half-past seven, and consists of coffee and tea, ham and eggs, lettuce, bread and toast; of course it is varied. Dinner at half-past one, of joint, soup, pudding, tart, salad, and cheese. Tea at half past six, of tea or coffee, cake, bread, toast, strawberries, radishes, and rhubarb; so you see I am well off, but then food is so cheap here. This is a very pretty place, and I like it vastly. We had a great day here on Monday 1st inst., as you would see by the papers. Mr McKie will explain it to you. There is no Canada *West* now, it is all one dominion, along with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. There was a fine review of volunteers and troops in the morning, and at night the finest display of fireworks, in the park, I ever witnessed. We have lots of boating and bathing here, as we are on the shores of Lake Ontario. I have had three dips this week off the island "Fennimore Cooper" has made famous. I expect to close with a gentleman to-morrow about a situation, but cannot tell you particulars just now, as the mail leaves in thirty minutes. Hugh got a place to-day, and leaves to-morrow for a town one hundred and thirty miles away. It is in some large "*store*;" there are no *shops* here. I saw by Jack's letter that Aunt Hannah has been with you; send her my fondest love, also to Mrs B. and dear old granny,

not forgetting Mr and Mrs Sergeant Baldwin, Mr Low, &c., and say I will write when I get settled down. Give my kindest regards to Miss Jeffry, and ask her to forgive me for forgetting her in my last, but I had *so much* to think of, I could *not* remember all. My best love to Mr Brown: he shall have a letter soon. Of course you show him these. Carfrae is *not* with me, nor have I heard anything of him. Best regards to Mr McKie, and thanks for his letter. Be sure and attend to the wishes contained in my last, also forget not to let my dear friend Freddy see this. Fondest love to aunty, and may God keep you, my dear, dear mother.—Your loving son.

JOHNNIE.

LETTER No. III.

153 ADELAIDE STREET,
TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA.
July 11th, 1867.

Mrs E. SWAIN, Edinburgh.

MY DEAR, DEAR MOTHER,—I have not received a letter from you, but I suppose you are waiting till you get mine before you write to me; I trust you have received it by this time, consequently your answer will be on the way.

Mr Stewart has got a nice little place just opposite my lodgings; I am going to take a view of it with the Camera for him to send home, as of course *they* don't know what kind of a place he has got. I like him very much, and consider him immeasurably superior to any of the family I have ever met. His wife is also a very

nice person and a beautiful singer; she is considered the finest singer in Toronto. They both sing splendidly, and lead the choir at the English Cathedral (St James'), where I heard them last Sunday. He has been very good to me, and so has his partner Mr Hewit, both having introduced me to most of the influential firms here, and if I fail in getting into one, he expects to take me into his own office; so you see I am all right.

The gentleman I mentioned to you in my last is a Mr Arthur, of "Smith and Arthur"; they have a very large place, and do a very extensive business in the wholesale grocery way. Well I called on him yesterday, and gave him a specimen of my writing and figuring, in the shape of two pages of a cash-book, Cr. and Dr. side; he called on Mr Hewit and told him he was extremely well pleased with my writing, and he fully expects to be able to take me in a fortnight or three weeks at the most. In the meantime I am going to join Mr Stewart, who has gone for his holidays to a place sixty miles north, where I will get any amount of shooting and fishing, and as my money is running low, I want to get out of the town till my situation is ready.

I am up every morning at 8 a.m., and to bed every night at half past 10 p.m. Every day since my arrival I have rowed over to the island (I told you about) and had a bathe, as I think it does me good; I can swim now five hundred yards, so you see I am learning. This is a very pretty town, and there are some beautiful walks. We have a nice park, which is approached by a splendid avenue of old trees one mile long, and in the evening it is deliciously cool. Close to the park is the College of Canada, and you have no idea what a splendid edifice it

is ; I am going to get a view of it to show you. Our college is *nothing* to it. There is also an Asylum for incurable lunatics, and the English Cathedral, besides sundry churches and large warehouses, all of which are very fine buildings.

The pavements here are *all* made of slabs of wood, which seem curious to me after the fine stone streets of Edinburgh. Most if not all, of the streets are lined with trees, which give a most agreeable shade at midday, besides giving a very picturesque look to the city.

We are sadly in want of rain, there has been only two showers for seven weeks, and the dust is three or four inches thick on the road. I sleep every night with the window and door wide open, as the thermometer has never been below 75° (and that is "summer heat") even at nights ; whilst in the day it is from 90° to 100° in the sun. I like it awfully, it is so different from the cold, bleak, cloudy days at home ; here the sky is that splendid deep blue, and the air is so clear, you can see for miles.

The flies are very troublesome, but I have not yet been bitten by "mosquitoes" ; however, I will have lots this week up in the woods fishing, where you are obliged to wear muslin veils and mits to keep them off.

Hugh has got a place one hundred and thirty miles from here, but he is coming back soon, as he has to work from half-past 6 a.m. to 9 p.m., and that doesn't suit him ; it is a country "*store*" he is in. Remember a "*store*" *here* and a "*store*" *at home* are very different things ; it doesn't matter how fine a shop is, or how large, even "Sturrock's" would be a "*store*."

I suppose you send all my letters up to Aunt Hannah, so she will see I don't forget them, and will let her know

what I am doing, as I can't write to any one but yourself till I am settled. Besides, it runs away with a lot of money sending seven or eight letters every week, and everyone sees my adventures and travels from *these*, and I could not tell them any more than I tell you; so if anyone speaks to you about my not writing them, you know what answer to make.

Give my fondest love to the Sturrocks, as I suppose you see Mr S. every week; also to John and Granny, tell them the "carte" of "Tom"* has been shown to lots of people here, much to their wonder as to the size of the cat. Mr Stewart works very hard, he goes to the store at half-past seven and works till nine at night, he is so busy; he talks of spending "New Year" at home this year, but is not very sure if he can manage it.

I forgot to ask you to forward any letters for me, as I expect some from Australia and New Zealand, besides some home letters. Please do so. Give my fondest regards to dear Mr Brown, I hope he is keeping well, also to Miss Jeffry, if she is still with you.

Did you see Mrs Fraser at the term? If you see her don't forget to give my love to her. Are "Topsy and Charlie" keeping all right? What did Aunt H. think of Topsy? I hope you are keeping well yourself, and not thinking too much about me; also trust the houses have been full, and are likely to remain so. I have no more news to tell you this mail, but will be able to tell you all about the Indians and lake scenery next letter. Don't be surprised if you don't get a letter for a fortnight or three weeks after this one, as it is not convenient to write up the country. I trust you write to my dear

* A big cat.

friend the St Major. Fondest love to Aunt M. A. and yourself, not forgetting Mr M'Kie.—I am, my dear mother, your ever loving son. JOHNIE.

LETTER No. IV.

153 ADELAIDE STREET, TORONTO.
PROVINCE ONTARIO, CANADA.

July 25th, 1867.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,—I am rather disappointed at not receiving any home letters this week, as it is over a month since I first wrote; however, there will surely be some next mail.

I told you in my last I intended joining Mr Stewart for his holidays; well, I did so, and have just returned. I have enjoyed myself exceedingly, as I have now seen some of the wild parts of Canada. Mr S. kindly invited me to stay at his lodgings, where I spent what would have been a very pleasant week, had it not been for an accident which happened to him there. We started out one morning to go fishing, and sat down on a tree to take a rest. Mr S. began amusing himself by cutting down a thick branch close at hand, with a small, sharp axe we carry up here, when unfortunately it glanced off and struck his foot, inflicting a deep wound and cutting one of the arteries. I immediately bound it up with my pocket handkerchief, and ran home for a trap and took him to the doctor's, where it was sewn up. It is now progressing slowly, but favourably, and the doctor says he may expect to be out next week. After Mr S. returned home, I packed up my bundle, which consisted of a blanket,

one shirt, two pair of stockings, the pocket comb and brush Mr Duncan gave me, and sundry shooting and fishing utensils, and started to walk twelve miles to a good fishing place I wanted to try. I there stayed with an English family from London, who, I afterwards learned, had failed in speculations, so came out here to redeem their fortunes. They were very kind to me, and refused all remuneration; however, should I ever return, I will not forget their kindness. I had splendid sport both fishing and shooting. I shot three brace of partridges, two brace of wild-ducks, besides a racoon and lots of squirrels and small game; the fishing would have been very good, but I *could not* stand those beastly mosquitoes, which were there in myriads; however, I caught two dozen and nine trout, weighing 15 lbs.

The houses up here are very rude, being all logs, but the farms and crops are splendid. In return for my host's kindness, I helped him with his hay-making, which I enjoyed very much. The scenery is very wild, but wants that mountainous background which so enhances that of Scotland. The sunsets here are gorgeous, giving the forest all round for miles a deep purple hue, which is lovely. I walked eighteen miles the other day and never met a human being, or saw the slightest signs of civilization, and I assure you I did enjoy it, as there was nothing but endless forest on every side of me. I feel very strong and well after my trip, and as it has cost me nothing, I think I have done very well. I was up every morning at five, breakfast at seven, dinner at twelve, supper at five, and to bed at 9 p.m. I can assure you that is the way to be strong and get a good appetite. Mr Stewart is very kind to me. I am never

out of his house; and the more I see of him, the more I like him. He has been talking to me, and says, if I take his advice, I will go into the farming, and not the mercantile life, as it is the only thing he ever regrets that he did not do, and as I am so fond of an out-door life, I have made up my mind to do so. He says it is the only independent, and one of the most lucrative, things in Canada. With this view I have been introduced to a Mr Donaldson, who is the government emigration officer here. He has behaved excessively kind to me. I have been to his house (I am going there to-night) and had supper with him and his family. He has a nice place here, and holds a high position. He says he would certainly advise me to go into the farming, and is to take me up himself to a place sixty miles from here, to introduce me to the largest stock farmer in Canada, besides sundry others; and he says he is confident this gentleman will take me; of course, he says, I must not expect much remuneration; but that I told him I did not care for, because you know I expect Clark out in the spring, and then I will be all right. I hope, my dear mother, you will be pleased with my project, as it is for your sake I am now going to work. I was disappointed at not meeting any Indians on my excursion, but I am told I was not in the district to see any. Tell Freddy I will write him next week, as I am in a hurry to-day. Of course you will show him this. Give my best love to Mr Brown, the Sturrocks, and Miss Jeffry, also to old Nelly and Peter. I hope you have attended to my small orders about my cartes, the things I left with you, &c., as I shall want them some day. I have not heard from Gibson since I came back, but I suppose he is doing all

right. I hope you visit his mother and family; she is such an extremely nice person. My fondest love to the Woolwich "folks" and dear old Aunty, not forgetting Mr McKie and the Stewarts, also Mr and Mrs Duncan. I trust they are all keeping well. How are Charlie and dear little Topsy keeping? do you think he misses me? I *very, very much* regret not bringing "Hector." However, it is too late now, he would have been invaluable here. Be sure and answer all my letters immediately on their arrival, as that is the only way to keep up a regular correspondence. It has been excessively hot this last week; just fancy 93° in the shade; and I believe we will have it hotter yet. I expect I will have seen this farmer before I write again, so will be able to tell you all about him and his place. I hope, my dear mother, you don't fret about me, and that my leaving home has not annoyed you much. Trusting you are keeping your health as well as I do.—I am, my dear mother, your loving son.

JOHN SWAIN.

LETTER No. V.

CARE OF J. STEWART, Esq.,
111 YONGE STREET, TORONTO, CANADA.

August 7th, 1867.

Mrs SWAIN, Scotland.

MY OWN DEAR MOTHER,—I am excessively astonished that I have not yet received a single line from home, although this is my fifth to you, and I am sure you must have received my first before the 5th of July. I trust you are all well, but I think, my dear

mother, you might have written to me before this. If you only knew how anxious I am to get my first letter from you, I am sure you would not have kept me so long in suspense. There is not even a line from Freddy, and I have sent him three or four, but I'll give it him. I got a splendid letter from the St Major last week, he is a dear good fellow, and I love him with all my heart. He speaks very kindly of your attention to him in sending the "Ladies own" &c. I got a bundle of papers from Fred this morning, and see by them Mr P. Sturrock is married. Please present him with my best congratulations. Were you at the marriage?

Mr Stewart's foot is not well yet, he still has to go on crutches, and is likely to do so for some time. He is very kind to me. I spend every evening in his house, and go to the Cathedral with him every Sunday. I enjoy my evenings with him amazingly; we have bagatelle and music. He is very well informed, and so gentlemanly in his manners, and his conversational powers are so good that the hours go like moments. I like Mrs Stewart just as well, and consider myself very thankful and fortunate to have such a friend here. He talks of spending New Year at home; if he does, I hope you will show him every kindness in your power, a thing I am sure you will do, in return for the friendship and attention he has shown your son. He has advised me not to go into farming till next year, as it is so late now, but to take an office, and wait till something good turns up, or my friend Clark comes out. I am sorry now I did not make up my mind sooner, as I refused two offices, one of them offered me £80 for the first year, and said he might make it £100 if I was sharp, but I wanted

the outdoor life so much, as you know how fond I am of sport and exercise. I went up to see the farmer I told you about in my last, but we came to no agreement as I was unsettled in my mind at the time. Mr Donaldson (I mentioned in No. 4 letter) went with me. He is very kind to me, and, being a government man, is a most useful friend to have. I have been at his house several times. Hugh Gibson has left the situation he got; they were catholics, and did not behave well to him, so he came back, but Mr Donaldson says he can get him work whenever he chooses.

We have had some rain this week, which has done a great deal of good; it was very heavy, our greatest storms at home were mere "*spits*" to it. Thunder and lightning accompanied it, and *such* thunder and lightning; my goodness, if Aunty was here she never would have got over it. I was out walking at the time, and all of a sudden the sky got black, a great flash shot out in front of me, and a MOST TERRIFIC clap of thunder followed. I thought the whole street was down. The country here just now is looking splendid; they have nearly done getting in the harvest now, and the orchards and gardens are one cluster of fruit: there are lots of hop gardens here, which look very nice. I just wish you saw the beds of wild strawberries, it is something extraordinary. When I was up the country, I just lay down on a bank and ate my fill till I was nearly sick, they were so splendid, and then gathered a three gallon basket full to take home; the raspberries are the same way. Meat is 6d. a lb. just now, and they consider that very high, eggs are 4d. a dozen, and butter is 8d. a lb. Bread is the only thing that is dear, (unless you make it

yourself, then it's cheap enough) why, I don't know. I have not yet formed a single acquaintance here. I intend to be very careful before I do. I never saw such a place as this is for lawyers, it is choke full, so if Mr M'Kie gets hard up, he knows where to come to. Lady Don is acting here at the Theatre just now; you remember her don't you; she was a great favourite of poor old Daddy's; it is a very poor place as you may guess. I went once and don't intend to go back in a hurry. A friend of Mr Stewart's has kindly put down my name as a visitor to the reading-room here, and I go there every day to see the English papers, periodicals, &c. By the by I hope you still take the "Leisure Hour;" you spoke of dropping it, DON'T by *any means*. Of course Mr Brown visits you regularly, give him my best love, he shall have a letter as soon as I get an office. I need not ask you to show *these* to him, as I know you do so. Be sure and keep all my letters, and remember what I asked you to do with them in No. 1. My best love to the Stewart's, Duncan's, Pyle's, and dear Miss Jeffry if still at home. I am collecting all the stamps I can, so take care of my album, also my two scrapbooks. Give my fondest love to the Sturrocks, and dear Mr Thyne, and ask them who plays them the grand Billiard matches now "Jack" is away from "Frater's." Are you going anywhere this summer? or have you been? Have you been to Rosslyn lately? How is it looking? I often think of it, for it is very dear to my memory. I was attacked by a mad dog the other day, but fortunately had my pistol with me, so shot him. I am now fast becoming a good swimmer, as I bathe every day, I am so fond of the water, it is so nice and cool

after a hot day. I have had several jolly rides on Mr Donaldson's horse. I rode forty miles the other day, and so saw a lot of the surrounding country. My dress here is a pair of linen trousers I bought, a white shirt, no waistcoat, and one of my white linen jackets on, the whole topped with a large straw hat or white wideawake. I think you would like me if you saw me, I look so clean. The bugs here are a beastly nuisance, I am half eaten up every night, but I don't mind them, only they tickle me so. Now if there is no letter from *yourself* this next week, I shall begin to get downhearted, and fancy something is wrong, so, my dear mother, do write me, for I have not received an answer to *one single letter yet*, although I might have had one four weeks ago, as the letters are only ten days on the road. Fondest love to dear Aunty and the Woolwich "folk." Trusting you are all keeping well.—I am, my dear mother, your loving son,

JOHN SWAIN.

I have just got Fred's letter, but none from you.

LETTER No. VI.

CARE OF J. STEWART, Esq.,
111 YONGE STREET, TORONTO, CANADA.

August 24th, 1867.

Mrs E. SWAIN, Edinburgh.

MY OWN DEAREST MOTHER,—I suppose you received the note I inclosed to Mr Brown ere this, and I most fervently trust you have duly noted and attended to its contents, as it is most urgent that you should do so

immediately. I received a very nice letter from Mr M'Kie the other day, for which I am truly much obliged; as he blows me up so often, I had no hope of receiving such a kind, friendly letter. I also got one from my Aunt Hannah, and as you may guess, it was a regular "Job's comforter;" indeed it put me in the sulks for the whole day after reading it. However, poor dear Aunty, I know it is all for my own good, and is meant most kindly. But oh! my dearest mother, why do I not get a line from you? It is all very pleasant to receive such kind letters from St Major, Freddy, &c., &c., but if you only knew the joy *one line* from your own hand would give me, I am sure you would not keep me so long without it. When I left home you did not tell me I left with your direst displeasure; and when you kissed me so fondly on the morning of my departure, I little thought I was not to hear from you for three months; and if my aunt's words are true (which I cannot and will not believe) there is every probability of my *never* hearing from you till I return home. Oh, mother, *do* write to me; don't let me think that I am banished from your loving heart, because I chose to wander from my home, most unfortunately, at the very time when you most needed my help and company to soothe you in the hour of your affliction.

I am happy to say that Mr Stewart is now all right, although it is only last week he has been able to go without crutches. I am sorry to hear that you have not been so busy of late, but hope things may take a turn for the better very soon. Summer never was our busy time, but you must not allow things to fret you.

I have made the acquaintance of such a nice gentle-

manly fellow, who came out the same time I did, he boards at the same house as I do. He is the son of a rich Manchester cotton spinner, and intends taking up business here, but has not quite made up his mind; if he does, he has promised me the head situation in his office: he has lots of money and is only out on pleasure. He intends going home next year, and says if I will go home with him he will guarantee me a capital situation in Manchester or Liverpool, so it is very likely I will accept his offer, as I know you wish me to be nearer home than I am at present. Please ask Mr M'Kie to ascertain about his father; very likely Mr William may know him. His name is Mr Andrew, Lees, near Manchester, and tell me all he hears about him; he is very fond of me, and I like him much. He intends going up for the shooting and fishing next month, and has offered to pay part of my expenses if I will go, so perhaps I may.

I have had several situations offered to me, but they were not what I would like, although I could have got 30s. a-week; so I gave them up to other young men who came out this year, and of whom there is any quantity looking anxiously for engagements, but I prefer to wait and see how Andrew's speculation turns out.

Give my fond love to the Sturrocks. I got a letter from Willie, and am glad to hear you are taking drives with Mrs S. I am answering Willie's letter this mail.

I was playing a cricket match yesterday, and am so tired I cannot stir to-day. However, I enjoyed myself very much, and the exercise is very good for me, although cricket *here* and cricket *at home* are two very different things, as the heat was most oppressive.

I have got Gibson a capital place, for, as I promised

his mother faithfully to do my best for him, I was determined to get him a good situation. I had a place offered me as town traveller to a large firm here, but as I did not want it, I gave it to Hugh, and he has made £6 *this week* by commission on his sales, and is most likely to make more next, as he is just getting into the way of it. Mr Donaldson has tried hard to get me to go farming, but Mr Stewart says I should wait till I see how long I am going to remain.

Have you taken the house at Rosslyn this summer? or what are you and Mrs Sturrock doing?

I have not yet seen the Falls of Niagara, as I can't afford it just now, but hope to see them soon, as they are only an hour's sail from here.

Mr McKie tells me Charlie is getting very sulky now; what is the matter with him I wonder? I trust dear little Topsy is not getting too fat, for if you feed her too much, she wont live long. I am more vexed every day I did not bring poor Hector with me, I could get £10 or £15 for him here, besides he would have been *invaluable* as a companion.

By the by do you ever hear anything of Mrs Downs now? what is she doing? and how is she getting on? I suppose you have not made friends with the Mozzi's again, so don't know how they are; or if Miss Mozzi visits Glasgow still.

Give my love to the Stewarts, Duncans, and Pyles, hoping they are all well.

Please send me *four* cartes of myself, two standing with my hat on, and two sitting, as I have none of myself here; also be sure, (now don't forget) to send one of yourself with the watered silk dress on and the

coronet, as I want to show the Canadians what a beautiful mother I have got, and most stupidly I came away, and in the hurry forgot to get one.

The weather is beautiful here, the air is so clear; we have only had one wet afternoon since I came; the dust in the street is about four inches thick, and comes in at the windows awfully.

Tell Freddy not to forget my papers every week, as there were neither paper nor letter this week, and I shan't write till I get one from him, as I have written five letters for his two.

My dearest love to aunty, and tell her this is a country for her to come to. No east winds here, snuff as cheap as dirt, and the very best whisky 1s. per bottle.

My health is excellent, and I eat, drink, and sleep, in a manner I never did at home. Love to Mr Brown. I will write him again when I get an answer to my last.

Trusting you are well, I am, my dearest mother,
your loving son.

JOHN SWAIN.

LETTER No. VII.

CARE OF J. STEWART, Esq.,
111 YONGE STREET, TORONTO, CANADA.

September 12th, 1867.

Mrs E. SWAIN, Edinburgh.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,—Pray forgive me not writing last week, as I promised, but I did not feel very well the day of the mail, so deferred it till this week.

You will be sorry to hear Mr Stewart has been again laid up; this time with bilious and intermitting fever. He

has been very bad and is just recovering; the doctor has ordered him change of air, so he is going down to Montreal and Quebec in the boat for a few days. I hope it will do him good.

Now I am going to tell you something that will make you laugh. I have had an awful row with my landlady, and have left her much disgusted. She has rather a nice daughter; well, this young lady (excuse my vanity) fell deeply in love with me, and because the attachment was not reciprocated, took affront, and her mother called me everything, and threatened to bring me up for damages, "breach of promise," and I don't know all what. My friend and I laughed like to kill ourselves, and pitched into the old woman like blazes, giving it her right and left. The upshot is, she gave in, and we left that afternoon for more comfortable quarters. It is a strange thing, wherever I go, I can't get rid of the girls. I thought when I left England I had seen the last of them. We are now stopping at a first class hotel, where we get splendid "grub" and apartments at the same money (12s. per week).

My friend and I went a long excursion yesterday of twenty miles up the river Don fishing. We caught six dozen fine fish in about two and a half hours. It was a splendid walk, and the scenery very fine.

The weather is splendid, it is now what we call the "Fall" or Autumn, and is not nearly so hot; we have frosts every night now. This morning the streets were all white, although in the day the thermometer stands 75° in the shade.

We had a sail over to the Island (I told you of) last week to get some duck shooting. I shot two and a half

brace of ducks, and five brace of snipes. We enjoyed ourselves awfully, only coming home we got caught in one of our heavy thunder showers, and got wet to the skin.

I dare say you wonder at my not speaking of Gibson; but I am sorry to say I have had great cause for breaking off a friendship I hoped was to be lasting, so we are no more than speaking acquaintances now. I am very sorry for it, but can't help it; I am not going to get myself into disgrace through him. Mr Stewart is so offended he wont speak to him.

From Mr M'Kie's letter I believe you would rather I would not get into a situation to *settle here*, so am making my plans accordingly; of course, as *you* have not written I have no idea what *your* wishes are, and am left to act entirely for myself. My friend, two Canadians, and myself, intend trading in furs and skins all winter, as it is a most lucrative business, if we are at all lucky; if not it will cost us nothing, as of course we are going back into the country, and there, as I told you before, living is next to nothing. No doubt the work will be hard, but then it is a most healthful one, and so adapted to my tastes, that I am sure I will like it, and turn over a few pounds. Of course, being inexperienced, I can't expect to be as fortunate as older trappers, but at any rate we will each make £50 or £60 before March, when the trapping season is over, so that is better than working in the town for half that sum, under some crusty old master. I shall start *whenever I get the answer to my last letter, as I CAN'T POSSIBLY go before.*

I saw by the paper that Mr Cathcart has got an addition to his family; I expected to hear of it sooner,

and was on the outlook for the announcement. I trust Mrs C. and child are doing well.

I also noticed you have had an encampment of Gipsies at Edinburgh. I suppose you visited them, as I know you are fond of that sort of thing.

I got a nice kind letter from the Serjeant-Major last week, which I am answering by this mail; but none from Scotland. Give my love to the Sturrocks. I am going to write Mr S. soon, as I have something to ask him.

Remember me most kindly to Mr Brown; I have not yet received an answer to my letter to him. I hope he is well. Mr M'Kie told me they have got another boy in my place; I wonder how he gets on with Mr C.

My fondest love to Aunty and the Woolwich "folks." I hope the dogs are well. I have no wish for poor old Charlie to die in my absence; there is no fear of Topsy, unless you kill her with kindness.

I am anxiously waiting your "carte" and my own,—*yours especially*. I am in excellent health and spirits, only would be much better if you would write; I can't understand your silence. Remember me to the Stéwarts, Duncans, and Pyles, also "Peter," "Nelly," and "Esther." Best regards to Mr M'Kie and respects to his family, if they come to town, especially Mr William. Hoping you are all well.—I am, my dearest mother, your loving son,

JOHN SWAIN.

I hope you are busy.

LETTER NO. VIII.

CARE OF J. STEWART, Esq.,
111 YONGE STREET, TORONTO, CANADA,
September 26th, 1867.

Mrs SWAIN, Edinburgh.

MY OWN DEAREST AND BEST OF MOTHERS.—Many, many thanks for your truly kind and most affectionate letter, which I received yesterday; and when I saw your writing I was overjoyed. I did not cry (as you know I am not one of the crying sort) but somehow the water *would persist* in coming into my eye, and I experienced a *great choking sensation in my throat*. But, dearest mother, you must not take it so sore to heart my leaving you. I know I have acted very wrong and very foolishly, but I will try and make up for it. You know the reason *why* I left home, and at the time I really could not help it; besides, it is doing me a great deal of good. My being here without any friends is letting me see the world, and to know what it is to be on my own resources. When you think of me, remember I am only *ten days* journey away, and that I am in the best of health and spirits; besides, it is more than probable I will be home next year, for reasons I told you in my last letter, or the previous one, and then I will make up for all my misdemeanours.

You tell me to write to Aunty, Mr M'Kie, and Mr Brown. Now I have written each of them, and *all owe me a letter*, so you see I am not to blame. You would see by my last that I have nothing more to do with Gibson, so keep your mind at rest. Mr Stewart is better

and has returned from Montreal. You also blame him for not writing; now I know he wrote long ago, because he told me his father had written for money, and he had sent some; also remember how *very* ill he has been *twice* since I came, and that would prevent him writing as often as he would otherwise do.

And to let you understand thoroughly what I am going to do this winter, I will give you all particulars. My friend Andrews and I, also one or two more, start next week for the backwoods, with the purpose of trading with the Indians (they are peaceable here) and trapping for furs, also shooting deer, and game for the Toronto market. It is a hard life, but it pays well, and *at least* we ought to get £100, and very likely a good deal more. Furs fetch a very high price, some as high as £12 each; deer are worth £4 a-piece, and we can easily get seven a-week; partridges are 2s. a-brace, and we can shoot any quantity of them, so you see it will very likely turn out a good thing. I hope to fetch you home a couple of bears'-skins of my own killing, as they will make nice mats, and I know that you would feel proud to say, "my son killed those." Now don't go frightening yourself and fancy I shall get killed, and all that sort of thing, because there is little or no danger, and I am quite capable of taking care of myself. We will have to build our own house and cook our own food, so *that* will be a novelty. I got the offer of a situation at £120 a-year yesterday, but then I have to pay my own board and clothes off that, so would have nothing saved to fetch me home, whereas now, I can *spend nothing* and *everything to make*.

You are right in your ideas of Allan, he is a dear good

fellow, and I love him with all my heart; if you only saw the kind letters he writes to me, they are full of kind advice and brotherly love, not that nonsense that generally fills up the letters of one young man to another, and I always get one from him once a fortnight.

My kindest love to the Sturrocks. I wrote them a long letter last week, so that will please them I know. I have no doubt they will tell you all about it.

I am glad you are pleased with my letters; but they will be far more interesting yet, when I get into the woods, and see some of the beautiful lake scenery this country abounds in. I am keeping a book of all my different wanderings, and what I saw, also my thoughts upon them, so as to show it you on my return, and to look back on in after years.

Many thanks for painting my house. Freddy told me about it. I would have spoken about it before, but I thought perhaps you did not want me to know, so as to surprise me on my return.

I am much disappointed at not yet getting your carte. I hope you won't forget next letter. My own you need not send till the spring, and then I shall want one or two.

I am glad the dogs are well. I shall never forgive myself for not bringing "Hector," but that is your fault.

My late landlady sent down for me the other day to apologise for her behaviour, but I would not go, as I don't wish to have anything more to do with her.

So you think the shop does not suit Freddy; well, that is what I said all along, but still I hope he will stick to it, as it is for his own good.

Give my respects to Mrs Byres, and best love to Miss Jeffry, also the Stewarts, Pyles, and Duncans, also to

dear Jessie Fraser, if you see her. I write to aunt Hannah by this mail.

My cousin has never written since my Grandfather's death, although I answered his, but it is of no consequence, as I don't suppose there is much love lost between us.

Now you *have* begun to write, try to keep it up, as, my dearest mother, you can't conceive what a pleasure it is to get a letter from you. Mr Stewart will forward them all to my hunting-grounds, so don't think I won't get them. I will write you before I go.

Thank goodness, and your kindness, I have lots of warm clothing for the winter, so won't require to buy any, as, if what everyone says is true, it is frightfully cold.

My birthday is next month. I will have no one to come into my bedroom and kiss me before I get up that morning now; but, never mind, I will drink my own health in a bottle of "Champagne" up in the woods, and that will do as well.

My fondest love to the "old woman," tell her to send me "*a cup of cocoa, and a piece of bread and butter*" by the next mail.

By the bye, your letters are only sixpence, not one shilling, as you put on. Now I must stop, or I will have nothing to say next week. Trusting you are in good health and spirits.—I am, my dearest mother, your ever loving son,

"JOHNNIE."

LETTER NO IX.

POST OFFICE, TORONTO, CANADA,
not to Stewart's.

October 24th 1867.

MY OWN DEAREST MOTHER.—You can't imagine the joy I felt this morning when I received your kind letter and cartes. I consider them very good, though not so like as the one with the watered-silk dress and coronet.

The hunting-party left for the woods last week, and I was not able to go with them in consequence of a severe sprained ankle which I had; and now I am very glad it happened, as since I have received your letter I have decided *not* to go, and had my ankle not been bad I should have been gone, and then it would have been too late to have received your letter, so you see it was all for the best. I was very sorry to give it up, as I have long looked forward to it with pleasure, but I would not cause you a day's uneasiness on any account, and I have, on mature consideration, seen that it will be altogether better for me to accept a situation, both for your sake and my own too. I have already accepted a situation to keep the books, and take charge of a large country store. Of course it is not a first-class place, but then it will do for this winter, and I have got *two good* offers for the spring. The owner of the store seems a very nice sort of a man. I am to get £3 (15 dollars) a month, and my board, which is not bad considering. I know nothing about the country, people, or how to manage a shop. You must not be angry at me for accepting such a poor place; but remember that the season is now far advanced,

and it is impossible to obtain a good place till the spring; besides it is better than doing nothing, for you must be aware my £20 is getting *precious low*. I have made two very good friends lately. One is a Dr Kempson, of good standing here, and the other is a Mr Jackson, just out from England; both have made me offers for the spring. Mr Kempson has very kindly invited me to go and stop at his house till I get a situation, and has promised me a traveller's place in the spring, which is the very thing I want, as it will allow me to see all Canada and the States without having to pay a "*cent*," besides having a good salary and commission on all my sales. Mr Jackson has offered to take me to the States to help him in drawing plans, &c., &c.; but I think the former would suit me best. Let me know your ideas on this subject, that I may know what course to adopt. In the meantime I go to this place as store-keeper next week. I will not be able to write you as regularly now, as I don't know what the postal arrangements are up there; besides, my duties, which are to be pretty onerous, will take up my time; however, you will certainly hear from me once a month, or once in three weeks. Address my letters to the *Post Office*, as *they* will forward them *free of cost* to my new destination, whereas if Mr Stewart sends them they will cost 3d a letter. He is now quite well and desires to be remembered to you.

Give my kindest regards to Mr M'Kie, and thank him for his three letters to me, all of which I received. I have no time to answer them now, but that does not matter, as *this* letter will answer all his queries, which are chiefly advising me to do something, if only "*chopping wood*," and not to go hunting, or, as he terms it, "*rat-catching*,"

Tell him *not* to send me *Scotsman's* or *Ladies' Journals*, as Freddy sends them weekly, but I would take it very kind if he would send me *Punch* every week, it will only cost him 3d., and 1d. for postage, and that won't ruin him.

It is too bad of Mr Brown never writing me, and Mr and Mrs Sturrock, also Willie, have not answered my letters either, give my love to them all.

We have beautiful weather now, it is what they call the "Indian summer," that is cold frosty days, but still the sun very strong. There was ice on the streets a month ago. We will have winter on the end of next month with a vengeance.

The other day I was walking along, and a man dropped down at my feet, dying. I sent for a doctor, and held his pulse till he was gone, which was in less than five minutes. He never spoke, poor fellow. He had been drinking hard, and had the "Blues." To make it worse, his wife had pitched some boiling water over him that morning, and both together produced his death. I felt very much for a poor dog that was with him, who could not think what was the matter with his master; and when he was put on the cart to go to the police station for the Jury's verdict, the poor brute cried at an awful rate.

Saturday was my eighteenth birthday, and it was the first day I have been dull since I left home; and I was really down-hearted that day, as it was the first birthday I had spent from you, and I sorely missed your customary morning kiss, and warm embrace; besides, it set me thinking on things which have transpired since my last—some of which I would much rather never should be

brought back to my memory; however, I am all right now, and as full of spirits as a bottle of whisky.

In your carte "Topsy" is looking as sharp as ever. I wonder if she will remember me when I return. I have no fears but what poor Charlie will.

You speak of my staying here *several* years. Now that I *couldn't* do without returning to see you, which I firmly intend to do whenever I have made £100. However, there is lots of time to speak of that.

Be sure and write me often, and soon, as it does me more good to get *one line* from you than *ten letters* from all of my other friends put together. Give my fondest love to Auntie, and the "Woolwich folks." I have heard Captain Smith of the "St George" is married. I wish him joy, for he is a real good fellow. I am glad you have seen him.—I am, my dearest mother, your loving son,
"JOHNNIE."

LETTER NO. X.

TORONTO, *December 4th*, 1867.

Mrs E. SWAIN, Edinburgh.

MY OWN DEAREST MOTHER—I trust you have suffered no uneasiness by my long silence, but since I last wrote I have knocked about a good deal, and never have found time to sit down for a quiet hour.

I received your loving letter this morning, and made up my mind, come what will, I will write to-day. Many thanks for all your news, and I am truly thankful all is well, and that you have been busy. Give Miss Jeffry my love, and thank her for the note; I will write

her when I have time : I think she might have written sooner, I thought she had been gone months ago. My respects to Mrs Byres. You shall have the stamps (to-day, if I can get out). Tell the young ladies there are only six stamps for Canada, but there are a great many for the States, and if they want *those*, I will try and get them ; or, I am going myself (I hope) in a short time, and then they might count on having the whole of them. I am very glad the Woolwich folks are well. Aunty has never answered my last letter, so of course she cannot expect *me* to write ; besides, I guess she sees all these, so it does not amount to any great fault on my part. My fondest love to them. My regards to Stewarts, Pyles, Duncans, Frasers, and Sturrocks. Give my love to Mr M'Kie, and tell him I am ashamed of myself, as he has written me *three* letters, and I have not answered one ; but I promise him one next week, certain. I am sorry for Bremner's family. Poor Susan is dead ; well, perhaps it is better so. I am glad Maggie is back : I always thought she would : remember me kindly to her, also Peter, and Nelly, the latter will be quite a swell with her new shawl. I am sorry you quarrelled with Jockel, but you are quite right ; of course, my dear mother, you won't be so selfish as to wish me not to continue my friendship with Freddy, because you know the strong love there is between us ; besides *he* is not to blame. I am glad you went to Sim Reeves and Ellen Faucit, as I wish you to go out as much as possible. I am very sorry for Mr Brown, and will certainly write to him. My very best love to him. I will also write Scott. My love to the Christies, and Curls. I will see their friend shortly, as probably I will be in Montreal this spring.

And now, my dearest mother, business-like I have answered your letter first, so now for myself.

To begin with, my ankle is all right long ago. I went to that place as I told you, but only stopped one month, as I would not do the work. I had to be up at 5 a.m., light three fires, keep a horse and cow clean, cut fire-wood, attend to the shop, and heaven knows all what, so I left; however, I feel stronger for it. I returned to Toronto, and was not in the city *six hours*, when I got a place in wine and spirit merchant's office at 25s. a-week (*six dollars*) where I will stop till I go either to the States or Montreal. You know, my dearest mother, it is not my wish to *settle* in one place. I want to see the *whole* continent of America before I return to you; and to do that I shall just stop in one place long enough to pay my way to the next, because what I want is *information*, before I make up my mind what I will follow, so as to know what is best. My present master is very kind, his name is Mr Clark. I am very comfortable, and happy. I do his writing, and go round occasionally soliciting orders. I wrote home to Mrs Sturrock by a man I met just starting for Glasgow. No doubt you have got the note ere this. I also wrote a note to Mr Wm. McKie by a man going to Hawick, and who knew him. I wrote home to Mrs Younger about Hugh Gibson to take him home; I got the answer this morning, saying he is to stop here till he can take home a *two years' character* from some employer, as she knows his ways too well already. My friend Andrew has been very ill with heart disease and congestion of the lungs; he has never been so well since one night Gibson and he and I were out, when Gibson,

like a blackguard, went into an hotel and got his tea, which he did not pay for ; well, the man of course was very angry, and was going to give him a thrashing, when Andrew and I, who were waiting in the Bar-room (*not knowing what the reason was*) took Gibson's part : *he* ran away, and the man knocked Andrew and I down, and kicked Andrew all over ; he had *eleven* cuts on the face alone. Of course we took the man to court, and now it is going to trial for damages. I am the principal witness. I wish Mr M'Kie was here to get the job as counsel. I will send you the paper with my cross-examination in it. I got a letter from Allan to-day, and he has seen Andrew's friends at Manchester, also Jack. I got a very kind letter from Mrs Sturrock ; but Willie is *long, long*, in my debt, *like a great number more*.

The cold weather is just commencing, and with it the skating, much to my delight. On Sunday morning the water was all frozen in my bedroom, and the sponge and nail-brush fast stuck to the wash-hand stand. I have been obliged to buy an overcoat, as mine was not warm enough, also a pair of gloves lined. Fancy my being so stupid as to forget my skates, I left them hanging in No. 4 kitchen, so I have had to get a pair here. Now I hope you have kept all my things, such as tools, postage-stamp book, album, billiard cue, &c., as I shall want them all when I return. It is six months to-day since I left home ; I can hardly believe it. In another six months I shall be thinking of returning, as I *could not* stay longer ; and then, won't it be a happy meeting, for no one knows the value of a mother's love, and a good home, till *they want* it. I shall never regret coming to Canada, it is the best thing that ever could have happened me, and I would

advise all young men to go a year from home, if they want to know how to behave themselves, and to see the world *on your own resources*, when you know you have not a friend within 3000 miles to give you a sovereign if you were *starving*. I was measured last night and I'm 5 ft. 10 in. and a quarter, so I have grown more than an inch since I left, and *my whiskers are coming on splendidly*. Now, you have never sent me the carte I asked you for, *do try and remember next time*. I hope Mr McKie has remembered to look over my letters to correct them, as I know there are some errors, and I can't read a letter over twice that is my own writing, although I read *YOURS TWENTY TIMES*. My fondest love to Aunty, and tell her she need not talk about cold at home; if she was here, she *might say something*. Mr Stewart and family are well. Excuse the blots on this letter, it was the desk, and not me, and it is hardly worth while writing over again.—My dearest mother accept my fondest love, and believe me your loving and devoted son,

“JOHNNIE.”

LETTER No. XI.

TORONTO, *Jannary 16th*, 1868.

Mrs SWAIN, Edinburgh.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,—As I promised you in my last *note* to write you a long letter this week, of course I must do so; although I assure you I have so much to say I really don't know what to begin first.

I was delighted to get another letter from you last week, and was only too glad you were all well, and had

been partaking of the festivities of the season. I trust my cousin enjoyed his trip. He wrote me a letter a short time since, which I have not yet had time to answer. Allan tells me he has seen him.

And now to tell you how *I* spent *my* Christmas. To begin at the beginning:—My governor's wife died a short time since of consumption; she had been ill fourteen months, and had a baby lately, which no doubt finished her; the child is alive, but not very strong. He does not seem much put about, and from what I can *hear* and *see*, he has got married again on the quiet, at least he sleeps *out* two and three times a-week, and last Sunday there was a fine dashing Yankee girl to dinner and to spend the day.

I wrote Allan a long letter last week with all the news, so if he forwarded it to you, this will all be second-hand.

And now to tell about the law case of my friend Andrews. I wish Mr M'Kie to pay particular attention to this, so that he may tell you the narrow chance I ran of getting into a very nasty scrape. The trial was fixed to come off on the 26th December, and on the 24th a friend of the prisoner's came and asked me to go and sing and play at a concert up the country for Christmas eve, guaranteeing that I would be back in time for the trial; well, as I knew the young fellow, and he had been a friend of mine for some time, I consented to go, but when I got up there I found it was all a hoax. He ran away and left me, and what was I to do? I hadn't a *cent*, and the landlord of the hotel I was stopping at refused to give me any, alleging that he had given his *oath* to M'Donald (the young fellow who took me away) not to lend me

any money. My board was paid by M'Donald, and all my expenses. I was treated very kindly by them all, but there I was, and there they intended to keep me. I never spent such a dull Christmas in all my life, and hope never to spend such another. Instead of going to the Cathedral with Arthur, and dining at a party to which I was asked, there I was, smoking an old clay pipe, and moping over a glass of beer, in a dingy back parlour of a small village inn. Had you seen me that day, you would have seen the picture of misery, I assure you. But to continue my story: I was there a whole week (till 31st Dec.), when, driven to desperation, I sold my topcoat to pay my fare back to the city. Immediately I arrived, I went to the police office to report myself. I saw the detective, and he showed me the warrants which were out for my arrest. I next went to see Arthur, and he was overjoyed to see me, and so was my governor; both thought I was murdered, and had given up all hope of seeing me again. Next morning (New Year's day), Arthur and I went a long walk to console ourselves and talk over the happy Christmas times we had spent at home. Neither of us had a *cent* to get a glass of beer with, so were forced to drink all your healths in a *glass of water*. How different from the last, which, if you remember, we spent in Glasgow; never mind, I will make up for it next year if I am spared. On the following day I went to Mr M'Nab, who is Crown Attorney here, and who is prosecuting the case against the prisoner Hanlan. Of course he had put off the case, but he said he never expected to see anything more of me but my corpse, as he said they often have witnesses put out of the way here. He showed me a proclamation

he had in his pocket of my description, which he was just going to send to every town in Canada if I had been *one hour* later. He was also going to write you and say what had happened, had I not turned up. The trial has not yet come off, and I don't know when it will, but when it does, HANLAN WILL *catch it*. The next thing was, they sent up for Arthur and I and offered us \$100 each to go away, but we did not consider that enough, so would not go.

The next thing to tell you is about Gibson; he is indeed a most consummate blackguard. He was *starving*, so I got my governor to take him in and *he slept with me*, well, a day or so after, I began to feel very itchy, and examined my flannels, when to my great *horror and disgust*, I found several LICE. I immediately burnt my clothes, and made Gibson take off his shirt, and would you believe it, he was *literally crawling*; I never saw such a sight in my life. Of course he was turned out on the spot, and now is doing God knows what; I would not speak to him on any account. His uncle is as bad. He has been turned out of a splendid situation he got, and now neither of them are ever sober.

You will be surprised to hear my friend Arthur is going home in a month, as his mother has never ceased asking him to return since he left. He wants me to go with him very badly, but I tell him I will not go until I can return in good style, with a little money in my pocket. I have a book lying here for this last month for you, but the postage is so dear I calculate to keep it until Arthur goes, so that he may take it; I hope you will like it.

The winter is fairly in now, and skating and sleighing

is in all its glory. I am sure you would like the look of the streets; there is not a vehicle of any kind to be seen on wheels; cabs, carts, and waggons are all on sleighs, and every one is covered with splendid furs which look so nice and *cosy*. All the people are rapped up in big coats and fur caps, and the ladies look so nice in their muffs and tippets. The ice in the bay is $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick, and the whole bay is one splendid sheet about *two hundred times* the size of Duddingston. Nearly all the girls here are splendid skaters, and look very pretty on the ice. The thermometer is often ten degrees below zero, and I can tell you that is precious cold.

Give my fondest love to the Sturrocks, &c., &c., &c., and I hope you will visit them.

I am glad the dogs are well, but I guess poor old Charlie is failing considerably.

Aunt Hannah has not yet written me; give my fond love to them all, not forgetting the "*old woman*." And hoping you have all spent a *merrier Christmas than I have*, I am, my dearest mother, your ever fond son,

JOHN SWAIN.

P.S.—Ask Mr M'Kie to rectify my mistake regarding the numbering of the letters, and to fill them up himself after this.

Excuse this, as the *ink* is beastly.

LETTER No. XII.

TORONTO, *March 5th*, 1868.

Mrs E. SWAIN, Edinburgh.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,—I hope you have not suffered

any uneasiness at my long silence, and feel confident when you know how busy I have been you will freely forgive me, and know that it is no fault of mine.

For this last six weeks I have been awfully busy. I have been in the shop before seven every morning, and have never left the counter till eleven and half-past eleven every night; my meals even were brought to me. So you see except Sunday I have not had a minute to myself; and on Sundays I was so thoroughly worn out I never left my bed all day. However, we are now a little slacker, and I immediately seize the opportunity to write to you, knowing that too long a silence on my part must make you feel anxious. I am going to take it easily now for a week or two, as, not being accustomed to such long hours, I feel my health slightly impaired by it, but a week will put me all right again. I now, for the first time, feel and know what you must suffer by being on your feet all day. I never knew what it was before; but I am as tired every night as if I had walked fifty miles; and the worst of it, I don't feel refreshed in the mornings by my night's sleep.

Last week I received a letter from my Aunt and one from Mr M'Kie, neither of which were penned so as to make me feel any happier by the perusal of same; but I am getting accustomed to such epistles now and don't mind them so much. When reading Mr M'Kie's I did not know whether to feel angry or to laugh, as he gave me a fearful blowing up, and seems to have misunderstood my last letter to you most woefully; and he finishes up by saying he should not be surprised if you did not write to me again. Now I thought that most ridiculous, as I have done nothing to merit your displeasure that I am aware

of. But really you folks at home make such "mountains out of molehills," and pick up every word a fellow says to you, so sharp, that I don't know what to do or say to please you ; and in the end I shall discover like the old man and his donkey, that the best way is to please myself. Now, my dearest mother, I hope you won't think I am writing this in any cynical mood ; but really I am getting tired of receiving such epistles. Here am I, away from all my friends, and instead of getting kind and news-bearing letters, nothing but these doleful things arrive week after week, which would make any one believe I had been doing my utmost to break your heart ever since the hour I was born, and now that I am seeing the world and meeting hosts of young fellows "just out," I am beginning to think myself a paragon of virtue, and often wonder how I have behaved so well as I have done. I intend writing my Aunt and Mr M'Kie on Sunday, and shall certainly give them a piece of my mind. I know it is all done in good intent, and for my good ; but when I come to go to the post office and get nothing but these month after month, why ! hang it, you know it is too much of a good thing, especially when I cannot reproach myself of having done any wrong.

My friend Arthur sails for England in a few weeks. He was to have gone sooner, but his money won't be here for three weeks, so he is detained. I suppose he will visit you when he gets home ; he has promised to do so. I think you will like him, but don't know, as you are so particular.

You will be glad to hear that I have got a first-class appointment for the second of May, under Government. I am going up to Lake Superior on a surveying expedi-

tion. I am to get £10 a month and all my expenses. I don't know how long it will last, but guess all the summer. It is just the thing I wanted, for I will be in the open air all the time, and have lots of fishing and shooting. Of course we sleep in a tent, and every day will have to shift our camping ground, which will be very jolly. I got it through the influence of a friend of mine, who is a barrister here. I have no doubt it will improve my health and strength vastly.

We have had a very severe winter: they tell me there has not been the like of it for twenty-six years. Last month was certainly very cold, and we had a very severe snow-storm, the streets being all blocked up, and the railway traffic entirely stopped; but still the winter is not near so bad as I expected it to be; and I have seen quite as bad snow storms at home as I have seen here. The coldest day we have had this winter is 28° below zero, and truly that was a "sneezer;" you would imagine you were walking with your face against razor blades, it was so sharp and cutting. We have had a thaw this last week, and now the streets are nearly clear, but the winter will not be over for six weeks yet. I can't help smiling at hearing the people grumbling at the price of meat, as the *best* beef is 7d a lb., and mutton is 3d. How glad the poor people would be at home to have it at such prices, and yet that is considered enormous here. Mr Stewart is very well and very busy preparing for his spring trade; but Mrs Stewart has been rather unwell. However, she is now better. My fondest love to the Sturrocks, Stewarts, &c., &c.; and tell Freddy if he does not write soon I'll kill him. By the by, I had a letter the other day from a cousin of mine whom I never heard of before.

I think his name is Reynolds—but I am not sure—in London. The best of it was I had to pay one shilling on the letter. Fondest love to Mr McKie, Aunty, dogs and birds, also Peter, Nelly, and Maggie.—And believe me, my dearest mother, your ever loving son,

JNO. SWAIN.

Excuse my not paying this, as I have no cash to-day.

LETTER No. XIII.

TORONTO, *March 16th*, 1868.

Mrs E. SWAIN, Edinburgh.

MY OWN DEAREST MOTHER.—There were two mails in yesterday, but no letter from you, at which I was much disappointed ; but, nevertheless, have determined to write you this morning, as I know how glad you are to hear from me ; and Freddy tells me you are much put about at not hearing from me oftener, but I don't think you have much reason to complain, for I am sure I never miss an opportunity to write *you*, whoever else I may miss.

I have left the situation I have had for some time past, through the advice of my best friend here, who thought it not good enough for me, and am now on the fair way to better myself.

This friend is a gentleman, a barrister here, by name Mr Meyers, who has taken a great interest in me ever since I landed in Toronto ; and it is through him that I have got my appointment of this expedition, which I mentioned in my last, and of which more anon. I have got him to write a note to you (which I enclose) to tell you what I am doing, as my Aunt, Mr McKie, &c., &c.,

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appear to have their doubts about my behaviour. Perhaps this may dispel them, anyhow it is very kind of him to take the trouble. I will send you his carte when he gets it done, and I think you will like his face, as there is something so stern and substantial about it.

This week I am going to enter the military school here to qualify myself to hold a commission in volunteers. It is not so much for that I join, but to do something, as until the 10th of May I have nothing to do. Besides, I get £10 for passing; and the exercise will prepare me for the life I am going to lead this summer. I will have to read very hard, as I have only *six* weeks to pass in, and it generally takes these Canadian fellows *thirteen*. However, I think I shall manage it. I will send you the paper when I pass with my name in it.

Now to tell you about the other appointment. I have got two offers, one to go on a Government survey, and the other to go with an exploring party up to Lake Superior, to look for gold, silver, &c., &c., which is to be led by an Edinburgh gentleman, by name Mr Savigny, who is an architect and surveyor here. If the expedition turns out well, and we find the gold, &c., I will get several hundred pounds, and if not I will only get my regular pay of £10 a month and *all expenses*. Now I have accepted the latter for two reasons:—I will see the wild side of nature, and travel over more ground than I would in the other; besides, it is a more adventurous life. Next I have the chance of making a good bit of money; anyhow I will get the same pay as on the other, so I have nothing to loose. We will have lots of fun, and it will be the making of me as it is such a healthy life. Now this expedition will last six months, and as I can't spend

a cent in the woods, I will have £60 waiting me on my return, so I intend taking a run over to see you this autumn, but won't promise yet, as it is too far to look forward to, but if I do I think you will see a vast improvement in me.

I got a letter from my friend Clark. You remember I went to see him a week before I left. Well, he wrote to ask me all the particulars regarding business, &c., here. I answered him last week, and advised him to come out *immediately*. He wants me to go into business, and I told him if it could be arranged, I should only be too happy, as he is a steady, quiet young fellow, who will make a fortune here in two or three years, as he has a little money to invest. I told him all I knew, and will let him into the ways of the country when he arrives. He is to answer me by return, and will of course call on you before sailing.

Now my dear mother I want to ask a favour of you. It will be six weeks before I go off, and I have no cash left to pay my board till that time—of course I will have the £10 from the school, but unfortunately they don't pay you for four weeks after you pass, and by that time I will be gone, so it would have to stand over till I come back, and it might so happen that I *could not pass before leaving*, as you see I have only *six weeks to do it in*; besides that I have several things to get before leaving, which are *indispensable* for the journey. So you see, *even if I could get the money, I will be hard pushed*, as I have a pair of long boots to get, and two or three more things. Mr Meyers has kindly promised to pay my board for me till I have the money; and I would like to pay him before I start. So if you can spare me a few pounds I shall feel very

grateful. If it will put you about, or if you can't spare it, never mind, I will manage to scrub along; but if *you can spare it*, it will be a great help to me. However, please yourself, I have told you plainly the position I am in.

I have not heard from Allan for some time, but suppose he is busy. I am writing him by this mail, also Freddy, from whom I at last received a jolly letter yesterday, and one worth answering. *I wish I could get a few more like them from other people I could name.*

You have never sent me the carte of you I asked for, and I know you have *several* in your album. Please don't forget the next letter, as I do so much want it.

The winter is breaking up fast, and it seems we are going to have an early spring. The streets are in an awful mess, as you may imagine, with four feet of snow melting on them.

I need not tell you to answer this *by return of mail*, as I may go sooner than the tenth, and it will take you all your time to catch me before starting. If you will kindly send the money, don't send a P. O. O., but merely send a *Bank of England* note. My fondest love to all friends and relations. Hoping you are as well as I am.—Your ever fond son,

JOHN SWAIN.

LETTER No. XIV.

CARE OF A. H. MEYER, Esq.,
BARRISTER, TORONTO, CANADA,
April 23d, 1868.

Mrs E. SWAIN, Edinburgh,

MY OWN DEAR MOTHER,—I received your very kind letter, and was truly happy to hear all was well, but I

was rather disappointed at its length ; however, you promise me a long one this week. I wrote you two letters within a week of each other, and you make no mention of the first ; but I suppose it is all right.

Many thanks for the £5, which I received all safe. You kindly offer to send me another, if necessary ; now I am afraid I will not be able to pass my military examination, owing to want of time, (as I go on the 24th) and will then lose my £10, consequently I shall be again in debt, as what you so kindly sent paid Meyers, all except 3s. ; but he is still paying my board, and will have to do so till I either pass, or hear from you ; so, if you can spare it, I would be truly grateful if you would send another, *addressed to HIM*, as I don't suppose I will be here to get it. Of course, *write to me separately*, and he will forward it. His address is "Box 199," "Post Office," "Toronto."

The "Cartes" are splendid, and have been admired right and left here, all saying, "what a beautiful woman your mother is." I said nothing, but thought, if they but knew it, you are as good as you are beautiful. You shall have mine, and the stamps next time I write, also Meyer's, and a great friend of mine called Scott, an Englishman.

You ask in your last after Andrew, and say I did not mention him in mine ; now, if you had read carefully, you would have seen that *I did*, and told you he was just on the point of leaving for England, and had taken a small present from me to you, which I have no doubt you received ere this, as he left three weeks ago ; I hope you like it, tell me in your next ; he promised to write you, and to visit you this summer. I wish you would

invite him, as he would think a good deal of it. That case of his came off last week, and I got a terrible cross-examination. I was nearly two hours in the witness-box, but I made them all laugh, as I gave the old lawyer what we call here, "*particular fits*."

There was a terrible tragedy here a fortnight ago. I sent Mr M'Kie a paper, so, of course, you have seen all the particulars. I will send another to-day.

I saw the gentleman, I am going with, the other day, and he told me to be ready to start on the 24th May. I am anxiously looking forward for it, as it will be a splendid trip. I am going to a place called "Fort William," 800 miles from here, on Lake Superior, all through the finest scenery in Canada.

By the by has that young fellow Clark called on you. I expect a letter from him this week, to say when he is coming out?

I am glad Allan has visited you, and know you would treat him well. I wrote to him a month ago, but have not received any answer yet. I trust he got it, I addressed it to Ireland, "to be forwarded," as I did not know his address. There has one letter gone wrong that I sent to him. I hope no more will.

The weather is truly splendid now, and is as hot as midsummer with you; but the trees have not yet put forth their foliage, nor has the grass become green.

I went to the Cathedral on Good-Friday, the singing was as fine as I ever heard.

I am getting on first rate at the military school, and have only three more squads to go through. I will send you my certificate if I have time to get it, it is on parchment, signed by the commandant here.

Tell Freddy not to forget the song-books I asked for. Now I hope you will answer this *the very day you get* it, and then perhaps I may be here to get the answer, which I should like very much to do.

Freddy is very good, he sends the papers every week, so I see all the news. I notice a great many people dead that I knew. We had a storm here about a month ago, something like yours, blew everything upside down, and did a vast deal of damage.

Give Aunty my fondest love. I send her two papers by this mail, which I trust she will get. I am glad the dogs are all right; I suppose Charlie is failing fast, as he is now getting very old; as for Topay, *she* is all right I have no doubt.

My best love to Mr M'Kie, Mr Brown, the Stewarts, Sturrocks, Frasers, &c., &c., hoping all are well. Of course you will send this to Woolwich, so they will see all the news.

Do you hear anything of the Mozzis' now? Freddy told me Miss Mozzi was going to get married; is it true? Tell me.

Are you going to Roslin this summer? I hope so, as it always does you so much good.

How are all the Glasgow folks? Is there any word of Mrs Latta being "*enbonpoint*" yet?

You don't say how business is, I hope it is good. Are the servants all satisfactory?

Remember me to Maggie, Peter, Nellie, and Esther. I shall write you again before I go with the Cartes, stamps, and all news. Hoping you will write "*instantly*."

—I am, my dearest mother, your ever loving son,

JOHN SWAIN.

LETTER No. XV.

TORONTO, May 11th 1868.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,—I have only time to scribble this short note to tell you I am off to-day at three o'clock, as they have changed their plans, and are not going to wait till the 24th, as intended. I had to give up the military school, and have got six months' leave, so will go back when I return.

I hope you have sent what *you said you would*, as owing to losing my £10 at the school I am again in debt to Mr. Meyers for board, &c.

I enclose my cartes; and if you want any more, I have arranged with the man to send them to you, on receipt of your address, and a P.O.O. for 17s. each dozen (they are dear out here), as I told him I knew you would want more, as half a dozen would never do.

Tell Freddy I am *exceedingly disappointed at not getting a letter and the songs from him*, as I asked him, *as a favour*, to write *by the return mail*, and now *three* mails are come and gone, and no letter, and I am going without them. Give him my new address, and ask him what the deuce he keeps sending everything to Stewart's for, as I told him the *Post Office* long ago.

I got a jolly letter from Allan, telling me all about your kindness, &c.

Now, *for God's sake do write oftener*. You said you would write "*next week*," and now it is three; remember I will be in the woods, and no one to give me any news at all.

Please send me "*Punch*" *every week* to amuse me up there. Don't forget.

I will send you a long letter describing my journey in about *a month*. Don't expect a letter sooner, as I have got 800 miles to go, and can't write sooner, there will be so much to do making the camp, &c. I am in the best of health, and, as you may suppose, in an "*ecstasy of delight*." Excuse this scrawl. Love to all.—Your ever devoted son,
JOHN SWAIN.

My address is :—Fort William, Lake Superior, North America.

I have sent a Carte to Allan, so don't you.
Have you received the books?

LETTER No. XVI.

FORT WILLIAM, LAKE SUPERIOR,
CANADA, *May 24th*, 1868.

Mrs E. SWAIN, Edinburgh.

MY DEAR, DEAR MOTHER,—According to my promise in the last note I sent you, I am now to give you an account of my trip up here. This is Sunday and the Queen's Birthday, and as I have some spare time I shall devote it to you.

I left Toronto on the day I wrote my last note to you, namely the 11th, at 4 o'clock p.m., for Collingwood, which is a town on the Georgian Bay where the boat starts from, which we reached at 9 p.m. Our party consisted of Mr Savigny, Captain Strachan (the late Bishop of Toronto's son, whose funeral I think I told you I attended), myself, and the captain's dog, "Jerry," which is a very fine retriever. We slept there that

night, and in the morning were joined by a Mr Brown, a young man who is Mr S's surveying assistant. My luggage consists of a knapsack—containing three shirts, six pair of socks, and some other necessities,—a fishing rod, and the suit of clothes I stand up in now, so you may guess I am not over-burdened; but Captain S. has got no less than *thirteen* packages, some very large and *heavy*, as I know to my cost.

Next day (Tuesday) at twelve o'clock, we got on board, and by 1 p.m. we were steaming away up the "Georgian Bay," which is a part of Lake Huron. We had splendid weather, and I enjoyed myself immensely; we passed through some of the finest scenery in Canada. When we began sailing up Lake Superior I was perfectly struck. I knew it was the largest piece of fresh water in the world, but still, when I found myself really on it, I could not help being surprised. Only fancy a piece of fresh water big enough to put the *whole of England* in, and lots to spare; and fancy being *out of sight of land for a day and a half*. I gave you a description of the steamers here in my second letter home, so need not repeat it, suffice it was just the same, and called the "Algoma." We arrived in sight of "Thunder Cape" on Saturday morning. It is a splendid promontory of solid rock 1,560 feet high (more than twice the height of Arthur Seat), and rises from the water like a wall. It forms one end of the land which encircles "Thunder Bay." When we got to the Bay, what was my surprise to see it *full of ice* (on the 16th May). We had to proceed very carefully, and could not get up to "Fort William." However, we managed to get up as far as our camping ground, but we could not get ashore that night, as all the boats were

engaged by the "Thunder Bay Mining Company" (a large company who have begun mining here this year), who had an awful lot of goods to take ashore, besides horses, cattle, &c., which went ashore on a raft. We had a good laugh over that, for while going in, one of the horses became restive, and upset the raft; two of the men could not swim, so they managed to scramble on to the horses' backs, and there they were holding on for dear life, the raft all broken up, and sundry boxes, &c., floating about in a most independent manner. Well, I assure you we laughed like to kill ourselves, the whole scene was so ludicrous.

Lots of Indians immediately came in their canoes, and got on board, where they immediately struck for the "bar," and all got beastly drunk, and of course fighting, &c. It is against the law to give an Indian whisky, but still they do it. We engaged one of the most sober to go with us in the morning, and when morning came, off we went, bag and baggage. The first thing to do on shore was, of course, to set the tents, of which we have four, which we accordingly did, and such a Sunday I never spent in my life, for I worked so hard putting the camp in order, chopping trees, &c., that when night came I was perfectly done and exhausted, and was truly glad to get inside my blankets, and to sleep my first night in the bush.

Next morning we were up by five, and to work again. My first thing was to cook breakfast, which Mr Savigny showed me how to do (now, of course, I am quite an adept), after that to go on making things straight. If I could only draw, I would send you a picture of our camp; however, I will try and do some sort of a sketch and send

you next letter. It is situated at the foot of a splendid fall on the "Current river" on a small piece of clear land, and faces the bay. On a fine evening or morning the scene is splendid. Thunder Cape lies on the left, and to the right are a group of islands called "Welcome Isles," also another called "The Pie;" farther to the right comes a long track of bush where "Fort William" lies; it is six miles off. Our Indian cook did not turn up till Tuesday, as it took him till then to get over the *effect* of the boat, and the same thing happens nearly every time the boat comes.

The fishing and shooting are splendid. The other day I caught nine fish, the biggest was eighteen pound, and the smallest $4\frac{1}{2}$, all salmon trout. I have shot lots of wild duck, rabbit, and partridges. I only wish I had a gun of my own, but there is a fellow here who kindly lends me his when I have time.

I am going off next week on a surveying and exploring tour with Mr Brown and six Indians, which I expect will take a fortnight. I have no doubt I shall like it.

I suffered very much from the sun the first week: *every bit of skin* came off my face, neck, and hands, in large scales, the very same as that time I had the scarlet fever, and now my face is like a boiled crab, and *lots of freckles*. My hands all blistered too, chopping and rowing, and so did my heels with the rough walking; now, however, they are *like nails*.

We have everything very comfortable, and the grub is excellent, as we have a lot of extras, such as butter-milk (preserved), pickles, &c., on Captain Strachan's account, which we would not otherwise have. Of course our only *meat* is cured hams and pickled pork.

June 15th 1868.

I meant to get this letter sent off by the last boat, but could not, as I went off to the bush sooner than I expected, and have just returned. As the boat is expected up to-night, I am determined this shall go with it.

It was exactly a year on the 5th inst. since I left home and you, my dear mother. I was lying before a large log fire, miles back in a country no white man ever had his foot on before, and whose woods have not yet heard the ring of the axe, when an old Indian stalked up to the fire like a ghost, and handed me your two letters, and one from Mr Meyers, also a lot of papers. I was overjoyed: for as I lay there, with nothing above me but the stars, watching the fantastic shadows the blazing logs made in the dense background of foliage, my thoughts were far away, with you, my dearest mother, and I was picturing to myself all sorts of happy scenes which have gone never to be recalled, and thinking over my joyous return, till I almost fancied myself springing out of a cab into your arms, with Peter standing at the door, my dear Aunt running up in the background, and poor old Charlie barking at my feet; when the old man came up and gave me the packet, saying, Mr. S. had sent him up with them, knowing how anxious I was to get news from home. I tore them open and literally devoured them. Many thanks for the £5 note. Mr Meyers had opened your letter and taken it out, as I told him to do, and kindly paid all my standing debts. I am glad you liked the books, and got a letter from Andrew.

Give Mr. Brown my fondest love, and ask him to accept of my most sincere sympathy for the loss of his wife. I was thinking perhaps you might ask him to take

up his quarters with you now, as it must be very lonely for him down there now; he might take my poor dear Grandfather's place in your house.

My best love to Miss Jeffry, and respect to Mrs Byres; I did not know they were with you. I am glad you are busy. You must have had a good winter and spring. My love to the Stewarts; compliment Mary for me when the happy event comes off. Love to the Sturrocks; I am glad Willie is going a trip: it will do him good. So Miss Symons is going to get married: well, it's high time. I hope she may be happy. My love to Mr. M'Kie, and thank him for the *KIND* (this time) letter and paper. I really have not time to write to him; but it does not matter, as he sees all these, and I could tell him no more. My fondest love to the Woolwich folks. I suppose Aunty is in an awful funk at me, but I can't help it, you have no idea of the work I have to do. I am glad the "old woman" is going up, it will do her good. I got a splendid letter from Allan before I left Toronto, but have not written to him yet; please send him this. I am very angry at Freddy; he has never sent the songs or a line for a very long time; be sure and tell him so, and show him this.

I like the woods very, very much, and would sooner live in them than the city, with all its attractions. It is splendid to come home (to camp I mean) after a long day's tramp, and throw yourself on your blanket before a roaring log fire, smoking a pipe and watching the swarthy Indians, flitting about like shadows, making supper. My food consists of a piece of boiled fat (called pork), a cake of flour and water baked in the ashes, and a tin cup of tea, without milk or sugar, three times a-day. I often laugh to myself to think if such a meal was put

down to Willie Sturrock, or some more of my friends, how they would turn up their noses, and yet I eat it with far more relish than the finest dinner ever you put down to me ; and you know what an epicure I was at home.

My appetite is awful, and my health never as good. I can now chop and use the axe like an Indian, and think nothing of a twenty mile walk through the bush, or the same paddling my canoe on the lake. I saw a young "fawn" (cariboo deer) and caught it, I drew out my hunting-knife to cut its throat, but the poor little thing looked at me so pleadingly, that I had not the heart to do it, so let it go, which it did most joyfully skipping like a young lamb. I also came across a large brown bear, he was sitting on his haunches right beside me, he gave an ominous growl as I passed, and as I had only my knife, I thought "discretion the better part of valour," so let Mr. Bruin alone for another time.

We have received an addition of four to our party now, gentlemen connected with the mining explorations.

I saw lots of silver, and found some valuable "amethysts," which I am going to keep, and get more. I expect to make a £100 or £200 out of them: there are lots here.

You would laugh to see me here on Sundays. It is the only day I have to myself, and I have to do my washing and sewing, and there I am, up to my armpits in suds in the forenoon, and stitching away like mad in the afternoon, for I tear my clothes awfully in the woods. I can manage the washing all right, but the worst of the sewing is all my stitches are sure to come undone the next day, and the following Sunday I have it all to do over again. I don't know how it is, but I can't sew it

strong enough, although, goodness knows, I stitch it hard and work most industriously to obtain the desired end, but it's no use.

Fort William is a Hudson Bay trading fort for furs of the Indians, and consists of about *six* houses, one very thick stone one, enclosed with a high pallisading, which used to be the stronghold in days when the Indians were troublesome. It is a very pretty little place, and situated on the banks of a stream called the "Kaministigua." I am learning to speak Indian fast, and can already say a good number of sentences; I am trying to make a dictionary. There is no church here, except a small Roman Catholic one, where the priest preaches in Indian.

The next letter I write will be a little in business concerning my future prospects. I have lots more to tell you, but I see the steamer coming in the distance, so must stop.

Don't frighten yourself if you don't hear from me for a month, as I may be off again to-morrow to the bush, and my return is uncertain. Of course writing there is impossible; as it is, I have got to row twelve miles to post this letter.

Excuse all mistakes, as I have written in an awful hurry. I can't get stamps for this letter, but I know you won't grudge Is. to hear from your ever devoted son,

JOHN SWAIN.

I enclose you some wild flowers, the big one is a plant called the "pitcher," which you always find full of water: blow it up and you will see.

LETTER No. XVII.

FORT WILLIAM, LAKE SUPERIOR,
July 25th, 1868.

Mrs E. SWAIN, Edinburgh.

MY OWN DEAR MOTHER,—I received your very kind letter last week, and am now taking a passing opportunity to answer it, knowing how anxious you are to hear from me.

In the first place I must answer your query about the "boots." If you had remembered what I told you in a letter last summer you would have at once solved the difficulty, namely, that the weather here is so hot that instead of wearing leather boots, almost every one wears "*white canvass shoes*," for coolness and comfort. The same in regard to the "military school:" I gave you *all* the particulars in a late letter. I had nothing to do, and they give you £10 for passing your examination. Well, I had no money and no situation, and naturally thought I might as well have the £10 as not, so went in for it. *Now, do you understand?*

I left Mr Savigny's party a fortnight ago, as they had finished their explorations and were returning to Toronto, so they paid me off, and I am now with a very nice gentleman called Mr Donnelly of Sarnia, who owns a large silver property up here, and is exploring for more.

I am writing this letter on the top of an old box in our camp at "Thunder Cape" (I mentioned it to you), which is twenty-five miles from "Fort William," and twenty from our old camping-ground at the mouth of "Current river." Last week there was a tremendous

rich silver vein discovered at the "cape," so we immediately struck camp and came here to try and follow it up into unbought land, and if we succeed I get \$1,000 (£200) as my share; but it is very difficult work, as of course the discoverers hide all their operations in the most secret manner possible, and I am always watching and dodging them through the bush to find out where they go to, so as to get a sight of the mine. As yet I have failed, but am determined to find out this next week at all hazards, as £200 is too much to lose.

Since my last I have travelled about a great deal, and now know all this bay and the surrounding country. I got some very fine "amethysts" a short time back, and am keeping them for you, as they are very pretty, and make beautiful jewellery. I worked very hard to get them, as they are in the solid rock, and I had to blast and pick them out. They are a beautiful colour.

A slight episode occurred here last month which caused a good deal of talking, of which I was the cause; but I really think people made far more of it than need be. Captain Strachan being a great sportsman, had a lot of powder with him, which he foolishly kept in his tent in a bag; well, I was sitting smoking very quietly on a log about nine o'clock in the morning, when all at once the Indian squaw who did our cooking gave a loud yell. I, of course, started round, and there was the front of Captain S.'s tent all in a blaze. The canvass was as dry as paper, and he had a large fly net spread over the front, so you may guess what a fire it made. I knew the powder was there, and if the fire got to it (which it would in a minute), it would blow everything sky high, and the captain has some very valuable things which I

would have been sorry to see go. So I made a spring through the fire and caught hold of the bag, but in my



1. My tent.
 2. Provision tent.
 3. Captain Strachan's tent.
 4. Dining tent.
 5. Wood and bark.
 6. Kitchen made of bark.
 7. Mr Savigny's tent.
 8. Seats.
- Background supposed to be bush. I have no time to finish it, and merely send it you to give you an idea. It was Savigny's camp the time I worked for him, and No 3 is the tent that blew up.

hurry a lot fell out. Of course there was no time to pick them up, so out I came and found there was about

twenty-two pounds still inside (he had sixty altogether), so I stepped back, and waved to the others to stand clear, in about a minute up it went with a loud report and all was over. The powder being there was the best thing possible, as it "*blew all the fire out,*" and there were only two or three small things lost, so we soon put up a new tent, and moved the things, and everything again wore its usual aspect. We don't know how the fire originated, but it doubtless arose from a match being thrown down, or a spark from a pipe, as the captain was eternally smoking in his tent. After all was over they *buried* the powder, but what was the use of "locking the stable when the horse was gone?"

The weather is glorious, but blazing hot, and it has been 100° in the shade. The woods are now in full foliage, and look lovely with flowers and ferns. The birds are singing away, and the pretty little squirrels jumping about in scores, running round your tent, and picking up the scraps. The whole scene is so enchanting, and I get fonder and fonder of it every day. We had a fearful thunderstorm here a fortnight back. I never saw the like of it. You could see to pick up a pin, the lightning was so vivid; and the crash of the thunder was awful. It rained torrents, perfect sheets of water, and altogether you could not picture a grander scene. The quantity of fish I catch is astonishing. The other day I caught eight trout which weighed 103 lbs. 7 oz. What do you think of that? Last night we caught a trout weighing 34 lbs., and a sturgeon 28 lbs. Last week we camped near a small stream, and I caught alone with the fly, seventy brook trout, in three quarters of an hour.

My appetite continues enormous; and the other night I

was very tired, having rowed twenty-five miles in eight hours. I slept fourteen hours without waking, so you may guess what my health is.

The flies are *awful*. I am nearly driven mad with them. There are *millions* upon *millions* in the bush, and my poor neck is one mass of lumps. Last week one of my eyes closed up, and I looked a bonnie object. At night we smoke our tent, and put a curtain over the doorway, but still a few will get in and annoy you, till in despair you allow them to get their fill of blood, and then they are satisfied. If I had a cent for every one I have killed this last six weeks, I would be a second Rothschild. Many a time I draw my hand round my neck, and actually *shake the blood off it*, they bite so viciously.

Three weeks ago last Tuesday, I was over at the Fort for a sack of flour, and saw a "*real*" Indian chief. He belonged to the "Ojibeway" tribe, and had come all the way from Red River to trade at the Hudson Bay store. His face and breast were all painted with vermillion, and his hair all done up in a scalping lock behind. He had a pair of scarlet fringed leggings tied with a scarf, in which were stuck his tomahawk (which was all carved, and had a pipe at the back of the blade, the handle forming the mouth piece), and a large sheath hunting knife; he had a blanket thrown round him, and his rifle in his hand. On his head he wore a most beautifully worked bead cap. Altogether he was a most imposing figure, and I was very glad I had the chance to see him. I shook hands with him; but of course he could not speak a word of English. I laughed to myself as I pictured how "Aunty" would look if such a figure

was to walk up and ask her for a pinch of snuff, or a friendly glass of "toddy" out of her *private bottle*.

You would like to see the Indian wigwams, built of bark like a cone, all coming to a point at the top, where the smoke ascends in a thin blue stream all the time, and the young squaws with their "Papooxies" (babies) strapped to boards on their backs, the same as you saw in that Panorama, if you remember. It is a pretty and interesting sight. And then again you would be in your element among the wild flowers, which are very pretty. The wild fruit is very fine indeed, and I stuff myself with strawberries, raspberries, gooseberries, currants, and cherries, all of which grow in great luxuriance here. The wild roses were splendid a fortnight ago. They are passed now. One night we camped in a field of them about an hundred yards square: the smell was delicious.

I have got some nice specimens of stones and silver ore, which I have found to send or *bring* to you, which will be a good addition to my curiosity cabinet which stands in the little bedroom; also Indian work, &c. I enclose you a piece of poetry written on birch bark, which the Indians make almost everything of here, their canoes, drinking cups, &c., in fact I don't think they could do without it. It is one of those gifts from the all-seeing One which supplies the place of those articles civilisation makes common to us. Put it in your scrap-book as a curiosity: it is just as I tore it off the tree.

THE VOICE OF THE STREAM.

Thou comest with a pleasant voice, O little stream, to me,
And softly spoken words are thine beneath the greenwood tree;
I fain would catch their import, as I linger idly by,
And, fearless of Narcissus' fate, into thy mirror pry.

Thou hast a silent audience,—the blossom and the bud,
The insects that are gambling across thy fairy flood ;
The violet tufts upon the bank, all give attentive ear,
And the briar bends down her rosy arms, as if she too would hear.

Art thou whispering to the little birds that nestle in the thorn,
How fair the heather bloomed upon the hills where thou wert born ;
How gladsome were thy footsteps then, how fain thou wouldst be
straying

Among the honey-bells again—is that what thou wert saying ?

Art thou telling of the freeborn things that dwelt beside thee there—
The moorcock and the ptarmigan, and the wild blue mountain hare ?
Of the gentle doe that followed thee to the rocky dell below,
Where the feathery moss, and the golden moss, and the grey green
lichens grow ?

I linger by thee, little stream : thy voice I love to hear,
Yet lingering still—thy melody grows sadder to mine ear ;
And under tones, like monodies, for ever seem to be,
Not spoken to the birds or flowers, *but solemnly to me.*

*I know not why the gathering tears I now can scarce restrain,
But the heart confesseth sympathies the tongue cannot explain ;
And memories of days gone by come o'er me as a dream—
What power hadst thou to waken them ? O tell me, little stream.*

Written on "Birch-bark" at Fort William, Lake Superior,
Canada, July 3d, 1868.

John Swain to his dear Mother.

I shall get my carte done when I get back to the city
in my working garb : it will astonish you. I have not
had a *coat, collar, pair of boots*, or a *waistcoat* on my person
for two months, nothing but a shirt, pair of trowsers,
all patched with *leather*, *mocassins*, and a belt, with my
hunting-knife stuck in it, so you may guess what a wild
figure I look. I am sure I could not bear a collar on
now, and you know what a fellow I used to be for
regular "*cut-throats*," and how I used to blow up Maggie

if they were not as stiff as blazes. One good thing, I never have been sick a day since I left home, except the sprained ankle I got, and never have had an attack of my old enemy the toothache, not even for an hour. Wearing the mocassins has entirely eradicated that huge corn which so disfigured my left foot, and now there is no sign of it. My toes too have got straightened out, and my whole foot improved. My "*whiskers*" are growing nicely, being so much exposed to the open air, and my hair grows very fast and thick, but I get it cut by some of the men every now and then, as I can't bear it in my eyes.

Captain Strachan left me his dog "Jerry" as a present, before he returned, as the dog (as usual) took such a fancy to me, he would not go *near* his master. He is a splendid retriever, and the best water-dog I ever saw. He will swim miles and miles after the canoe, if we don't take him in. He is well trained and very handsome. His hair is dark brown and all curls. He is very fond of me and never leaves my side for a moment. He won't let a stranger *near* the camp if I am there. He has just been in the water now, and shook himself all over the place, which is the cause of this piece of paper being so dirty, and the half of it torn off, as he literally soaked it before I could stop him, and I have no time to write it over again.

The water here is the finest I ever saw,—so cold and clear. I bathe every morning by five o'clock, and sometimes two and three times a-day when it is very hot.

To give you an idea of the life I lead, I will give you an account of a day's doings. We rise (Mr Donnelly and I) every morning by sunrise (half-past four) and I immedi-

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ately plunge into the lake and soap myself, as I like to be sweet and clean, and then light the fire and cook breakfast, which consists of beautiful fresh trout, pork, potatoes, tea, and bread (my own baking)—I am a first-class cook now, and do all that work myself; I then "*wash up*" our tin plates and cups, and put everything away in our box, roll up the blankets, and tidy the tent, and then sit myself down for a quiet smoke, and talk with Mr D. regarding the day's duties; about six we start off with our picks and shovels, and tramp through the woods smashing up the rocks, and if we find silver, drill a hole and put a blast in to see if it is valuable, picking and shovelling like mad. It is very hard work, but I like it, as it makes me strong and healthy. My hands are like stones now. At twelve (by the sun, we have no watch) we take dinner, which is just a repetition of breakfast, only an addition of pea-soup, which I am an adept at; another smoke, and then off again. If we find nothing of importance, we pack up and move to a fresh place; if, on the other hand, we strike a vein, we stop for a day or two and work it up. About six we return to camp, and have supper, and read for an hour, and then roll up in our blankets and enjoy such sleep as seldom visits "*city eyes*." No undressing here. Get in just as you are, minus your boots, and say your prayers (which we never neglect) and then *five minutes* after, "*Somnus*" has his full sway. On Sunday we lie longer, and read the Bible for an hour, then sleep or "*loafe*" the rest of the day, as we are only too glad of a day's rest. It is a hard, healthy life, and just the one to make a man of any one, but he must be no grumbler, content to put up with hardships, and not afraid to work right hard

with his pick or axe. If you know any *spoilt boy* who *thinks his home not good enough for him*, and mighty fastidious about his grub, just send him out to me, and I will guarantee to cure him most *thoroughly* in six months, and probably, disgusted with life in the woods, unless he is like me, *devotedly fond of the life with all its hardships*, and I doubt if you will find many brought up in *such a home as I have*, who could like a Canadian life. All I have met here are returning disgusted to the city, and with me, instead of getting *disgusted*, every day my love for it gets *stronger and stronger*, and fresh beauties of nature appear to my eyes hourly, which pass unnoticed to others, and which serve to strengthen my love for the woods; and my reverence for my Creator, who has made such a lovely world for man to live in. The aspect which is now spread before me, as I write this, is past description, and my pen is far inadequate to the task of giving you a description. My mind even is almost incapable of appreciating it.

The men that I most appreciate and wonder at here are the Roman Catholic priests. They devote all their lives to the education of the Indians. The wonders they work are incredible. They don't see a white man once a year, and perform long journeys *all alone* in their canoes, to visit the sick Indians. Any traveller, *whatever creed* he may be, receives a warm welcome and shelter from them; and they won't receive *on any account a donation*, but will help you all they can for your further comfort on your journey. What a lesson this is to our Scotch ministers, who are always quarrelling about Church trifles, and seeking money, and won't let any one enjoy light conversation, or talk of any creed but his. Whereas

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these poor men devote their whole lives and energy to their God and those poor heathens up here whom they clothe and feed all winter. They are all French, and live a very strict life. They are not allowed to marry, and have no women about their house, so you may fancy the devoted life they lead. When I return and get hold of "*Mrs Christie*," or such like, I will pitch into them. I can tell you, and you may tell her so, with my compliments, I would like to see any of her favourite preachers show "*a tenth*" of the zeal for their God these good men do, and wonder how long *they* would live without their comforts and wives. *No*, not if all the heathens in the world were to die through it. I may use strong language, but I speak from what I have *seen*, and I admire and respect these devoted men with all my heart and soul, and only hope some day I may be in a position to do some of them a kindness.

One night lately Mr Donnelly and I were caught in a terrific thunder-storm, and, wet through, we sought shelter at the priest's shanty here. He treated us most kindly, and gave us blankets in his own dormitory, and lit a fire to dry our wet things. We had a good supper and breakfast, with the pleasure of an evening's conversation with him. He is a very learned man (as all are), and a Parisian by birth. He belongs to the Jesuit order, by name Jeronchy. I never met a kinder and more pleasant companion, and wish half our ministers were like him.

The last trip the boat made was an excursion of all the reporters and press men in Canada, sent here to see for themselves the way Government is taxing and abusing the mining speculators, so as to give it them hot in their papers. There were lots of ladies on board, about two

hundred in all, and I went on board in my working clothes. After looking round I walked up to the piano and played some music over, also sang a couple of songs. There was a perfect excitement. They all thought I was a common miner, and were thunderstruck. In less than ten minutes every lady on board was round me, and I was made a perfect lion for the rest of the day. We had lots of fun, and they made a great deal of me. Nearly all of them gave me their addresses, and pressed me most kindly to visit them. So you see what impression your son made through your having him taught music, and how to conduct himself as a gentleman. My name will be all over Canada in the papers as the wonder of Lake Superior. If I get a paper I will send it to you. I did not tell them my right name, as I did not wish such a fuss made about me, but called myself Mr *MacSwain* of Scotland. I enclose you a pamphlet, which they printed on board every night for amusement. Their visit will doubtless do a great deal of good for the country.

You must excuse this letter, as I am sitting in a very cramped position, and can't write well. There is one thing, you can't grumble at the length of it, as I have told you all I think will interest you.

Many thanks for the papers. "Punch" is a great treat here, and goes round the whole country. Please continue to send it, along with any others you can get: all are very acceptable. Don't send the "Scotsman" or "Ladies Journal" as Fred does it regular.

I got a nice letter from Andrew, and one from Freddy, but have not heard from Allan for over two months. I suppose he is angry at my not writing, but he is not aware of the difficulty of getting letters conveyed to the

steamer, and must forgive me. Send him this, and he will then see I am not to blame.

Write often, as you little know what a treat your kind letters are here in the wilderness.

My fondest love to Aunt H., Mrs B., Granny, Aunty, the Sturrocks, Duncans, Stewarts, Mrs Byers, Miss Jeffrey, Maggie, Willie, Peter, and the dogs, &c., &c.

Thank Mr McKie kindly for the papers ; and tell him his letters are only too welcome if like the last, and not to "growl" at my not writing, as you are the only one I can do so to in my present circumstances ; and if this letter goes the rounds, as I suppose it will, nobody can grumble. Best love to Mr Brown. Tell him to remember me to the Skirvings. He might *at least* have sent me a *paper* all this time. Surely he has not forgotten me.

I suppose dear Aunt Hannah is disgusted at her nephew ; but I can't help it, and must bear all hard words in peace till my return, and then show though out of sight they were not out of mind.

I have received *all* your letters, and don't be the least alarmed as to the safety of them, as they come quite safe.

The boat has just grounded on the beach that is to take this letter to the Fort, so I must close with my fondest love and earnest prayer for your safe keeping till my return.—I am, my dearest mother, your devoted son,

JOHN SWAIN.

P.S.—I enclose you a small piece of silver chipped off a specimen I found yesterday.

LETTER No. XVIII.

FORT WILLIAM, LAKE SUPERIOR,
CANADA, *August 5th* 1868.

Mrs E. SWAIN, Scotland.

MY OWN DEAREST MOTHER,—You will be agreeably surprised to get this letter from me no doubt, after writing you such a long one last week, but I have such good news to tell you I immediately seize the opportunity, as the steamer is due to-morrow.

I got your truly kind letter yesterday, and was very sorry to hear of poor John Sturrock's death, but was glad to find every one else well and all apparently enjoying yourselves. I suppose you are all stuffing away at strawberries and cream now as hard as possible. Thank Mr M'Kie for his kind letter.

You will be delighted to hear I have made a grand discovery, and found the richest vein of silver yet found on this coast, the full particulars you will find enclosed, along with a map of the country I sketched this morning for your benefit. And now to business. I want to give you full instructions what to do, as I want you to raise a company of four gentlemen for me, to buy this property you see inclosed. The price is only £2,000, so each will only have to pay £500, and I get a fifth share and pay nothing, that is for my information. I want you to show this to Mr M'Kie first, and let him give his brothers the first offer of it, then show it Mr Sturrock, Mr Jockel, Mr Brown, Mr Bell of Glasgow, Mr M'Culloch, Mr Spence. Put all those grand energies of yours to work, and remember it is for your son you

are doing it, and I know you will have no difficulty in raising the money, as it is so small. Impress on them that I will at once return and give them personal conferences about the matter, so earnest am I. Don't leave a stone unturned, and in a few years you may see your son hold a very different position from his present one. If they think four too few, I don't care how many take it, only that the deeds must be drawn up so that when the property is sold for its real value I get a *fifth*—less I won't take.

I have not much to tell you, as I wrote you such a long letter last week.

The stamps I will send you whenever I return to the city: here I can't get them.

I returned from Thunder Cape on Saturday, and am at my old encampment. You will see Current river on the map. I am at the mouth of it.

Yesterday I went to church amongst all the Indians. I was the only white man there. I'll never go again. The smell was beastly. What that poor dear priest must suffer.

I like Mr Donnelly very much. He and I get on splendidly. I am going home with him in about six weeks, to transact some business for him in the States.

I suppose Mrs Baldwin has returned long ere this, and Auntie is much better for her trip. Give my fond love to *everybody*. Now, my dearest mother, I do trust you will exert yourself for me, and write back immediately and tell me how the matter goes, and if I am to send the specimens, letters, &c., or if I am to come myself. I shall await your reply most anxiously. Excuse the

writing, as I am on the ground as usual.—I am, your
ever loving and devoted son, JOHN SWAIN.

All letters after this to—Mr John Swain, care of J.
P. Donnelly, Esq., Box 14, P. O. Moortown, Lamb-
town County, Canada.

P.S.—Give Mr Cathcart the first offer. I think he
would like to go into it. Take it to him *this very day*,
as every moment is precious, or I may be cut out. If
he refuses it, then the M'Kie's, then go through to
Glasgow and see them all about it, but I think Mr
Cathcart and the M'Kies will take it themselves. Show
Mr C. the map. My prospects are much improved,
and I am making money, I'll be bound, *quicker and more*
than you are. J. S.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SILVER LEAD MINE DISCOVERED
BY ME ON THE "HAPPY HOME LOCATION," BLACK
BAY, LAKE SUPERIOR, CANADA.

ON Monday, 27th July 1868, when camped twenty-
five miles down Black Bay, and fifty from Fort William,
I was taking a walk by myself through the forest, and
came on a high piece of land which had evidently been
recently burnt over; for as I ascended, the rock began
to show itself through the burnt moss and debris, and on
my arrival at the top it was perfectly bare. To my
surprise and intense pleasure, I saw a vein of metal
running right across the rock. I had my pick with me,
and immediately struck a piece off, when I at once saw it
was "Silver Lead." I traced the vein down the side of

al.—I am, your
JOHN SWAIN.

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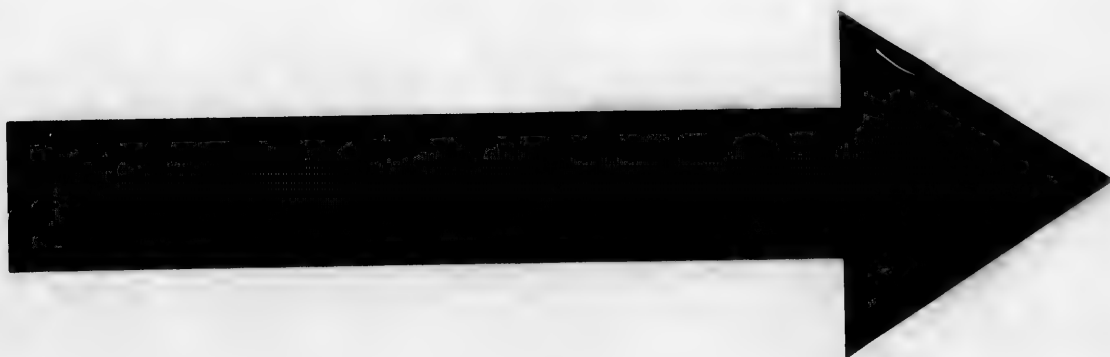
the hill and was overjoyed to find it 150 feet from the top, and getting wider and richer as it descended. I took some very fine specimens of "Amethysts" and "Silver-lead," also "Native Silver" out, and returned to camp delighted and proud of my success.

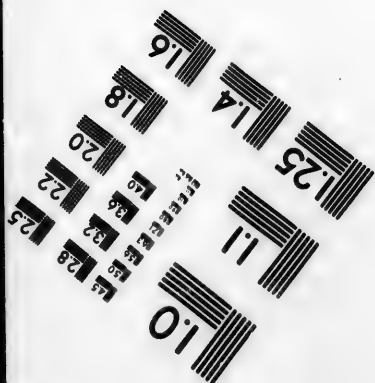
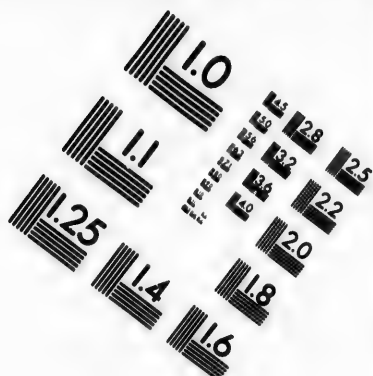
I showed the specimens to Mr J. P. Donnelly of Sarnia, for whom I am working, and he at once pronounced them very fine. I told him if he would give me his word as a gentleman, not to interfere with my arrangements and future doings, I would show him the vein, as I wanted his advice and opinion on it, I being a novice in mining matters. He at once gave it me, and as he owns several splendid mines himself here, I knew he would keep it. We immediately started off, and the moment he saw it he said it was the finest looking vein he ever saw, and extremely rich; in fact the whole vein is one mass of ore.

To give you further ideas, I make the following comparisons:—

The "McIntyre" mine, which is owned by a Montreal Company, called the "Thunder Bay Mining Coy.," is going on very well. They have got machinery from England, houses built, roads made, &c., &c., and value their mine at \$1,000,000 (£200,000). They have already sold stock to the amount of \$250,000 (£50,000) in Montreal. I have been all over the mine, and so fine is the metal (silver) you have to take a microscope to see it, whilst in *mine* you can walk right over it, and see any quantity with the naked eye.

Again there is the "Wither's mine," owned by Mr Withers, and two other American gentlemen. They were offered last month, in New York, \$400,000





**23 WEST MAIN STREET
WEBSTER, N.Y. 14580
(716) 872-4503**



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(£80,000.) I have also seen it, and it also is not nearly so rich as the one I found.

The Government of this country is dead against mining men, and won't sell any of their crown lands to mine on, but only rent out one hundred feet to one person at a time. What was my joy then, to find this was on land already bought and patented before the new law came in; so I immediately found out to whom it belonged, and as the owner's partner happened to be up here, I immediately went and called on him. I of course did not let him get an inkling of my discovery, but merely mentioned in a casual way that I believed he had some mining lands for sale. He said he had; and I asked him to see his map of the locations, and the price of them. He at once showed them me. I picked out *my* lot, and asked him carelessly what the price of it was; he told me \$9,720 (£2,000), but did not strongly recommend it. I said I intended speculating a little, and that was the only one that came within reach of my pocket. He replied, of course, the more valuable the land the higher the price; and that was the least promising lot he had. After that I went down to the "Sue St Marie" to see the register, if all was correct, and the land really his; and found all right. So now everything is satisfactory. I write to you to give full particulars.

Further proofs of the mine's value:—The mine is in a bed of granite, and about two feet wide on the top. You walk along the pure metal, right on the summit, just like a well beaten path, follow it along one-quarter of a mile, and then the hill makes a sudden steep descent of about one hundred and fifty feet; at the bottom of this you again see the vein, and now it is four and a half feet

wide, showing what all miner's prize so much, that the vein gets wider as it descends. You can take your pick, as I have done, and knock out almost solid chunks of silver and lead, giving from what we suppose by rough guess thirty per cent. lead, and from one to four pounds of fine silver to the ton of ore. Now this is far more than either the Withers or M^cIntyre can show.

The vein is a continuation of one on the adjoining property belonging to the same man which he sold in New York for \$25,000, without any such show as I have got. It is two miles distant from my one, and I have visited it.

The reason they don't know of this vein is, until this spring it was covered with dense foliage, which was burnt off by one of those fires which ravage the forests at times; and it being far from all human habitation, I was the first to visit it after the fire, and to see the wealth it had laid bare. If the owner had the slightest idea of it he would raise the price to an enormous figure at once, and he would gladly give me, I know, \$4000 or \$5000 for the information. But I have other plans, which I will explain after.

What is most against me is my youth, to invite old heads to go into what they may fancy I have been gulled into. To guard against this, I will, in addition to the specimens I have broken out, as they appear on the surface, get further evidence.

There are three men here, respectable, but ignorant, they are brothers, and thoroughly practical miners, whom I will let into my secret, and get their affidavits as to what they think of it; also the report of Mr J. P. Donnelly, who is a gentleman and a magistrate; and to

add to all, the opinion of the very famous Rev. Dr. Duffield, who bought the adjoining property from the Government (before the new act), without any surface show, but merely from its geological features.

You may wonder who Mr Donnelly is, that I put such confidence in him. He is a man of practical and theoretical knowledge. Although well off he sticks to his business, which has become second nature to him. He was the first man who explored these wild regions, and to find silver, and has travelled over them since 1846; so *he* ought to know at least. It is a great thing for me that I am with him, as I am getting all his experience, and he teaches me geology, mining, &c. Besides paying me my wages, he allows me the full benefit of all I find, such as amethysts, specimens, &c., and lastly my great discovery.

For benefit of those I wish to invest, I give the following information, as I know they are business men, and these questions will naturally arise to them:—

How far is it from navigation?

How off for fuel?

What is its course, and if easy of access?

How many ton can one gang, which is three men, turn out per day?

How off for water?

These questions I will answer in rotation:—

It is only half a mile from Black Bay, which is available for the largest ship that floats, much less lake steamers.

For fuel the men have only to take their axes and help themselves to any quantity of the finest timber in the world (as all know) right round the mine.

The course of the mine is north-east and south-west,

and there is a good path from the Bay up to the mine, made years ago, during the first explorations.

Three men can turn out five tons per day, at a cost of \$6 (£1 4s.) for wages and food per day.

The finest water in the world is to be got by sinking a well a few feet down ; beside the Bay water.

The path mentioned above is the one leading to the mine on the adjoining property, and passes my one. A good road could be cut in a week at cost of \$100 (£20.)

The steamer passes the head of the Bay on the road to Fort William every week, and would gladly call in at Black Bay were anyone there.

Now what I want is four or five gentlemen to buy this property, consisting of two hundred acres, on which stands the mine, for \$9,720 (£2000). And to show that I am acting fairly, I don't wish any bonus for my information, but will take a fifth interest, that is, that I am admitted a partner in the Co. without paying any share, and that when the mine is sold (which I can myself easily do) that I get a fifth of the proceeds after paying all expenses. The reason I wish my friends at home to go into it is that, they being my own personal friends, I wish to do them a kindness ; besides, I know I will be dealt fairly by, and *that* I can't insure here.

I don't invite my friends to go into heavy mining speculations, but merely to buy the land and hold it till I develope it, and bring it before the notice of the public and great capitalists of the States. But in case they may fancy to mine for themselves, I give the following calculation of the work.

In regard to my estimate about the percentage of the ore, I am quite sure I have *underrated* and *not* overrated

the information, but when specimens are forwarded to you, and an assay made on them by some chemist, you will be able to form a more correct estimate, which I cannot do here, and if I could I would not, for fear of leading to suspicion and information to the owner's ears. As it stands, I will give the calculation of yearly proceeds according to my underrated percentage.

30 per cent. lead, which is 30 lbs. of lead to 100 lbs. rock, at six cents per lb., wholesale price here, with one gang of three men working five tons per day, will be 600 lbs. lead to ton, we'll say 500 lbs. per ton of rock. 5 tons per day, will be 2,500 lbs. per day, at six cents, comes to \$150 per day, \$900 per week, and \$46,800 per year. Average the silver at $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. per ton of rock, at \$12 per lb. and you have \$150 per day, \$900 per week, and \$46,800 per year, total lead and silver together for one gang per day, comes to \$93,600 per year (about £18,000). It will be necessary to have twelve men and one foreman at \$2 each per day, and board themselves, which is \$26 per day, \$156 per week, and \$8,112 per year. Powder, fuse, anvil, bellows, tools, &c., &c., \$1,000 per year, total, \$9,112 yearly. Twelve men are three gangs, and will take out \$280,800 worth of ore per year; deduct expenses, viz., \$9,112, and you have a nett profit of \$271,688 (about £55,000 per year). With any other unforeseen expenses there may be, we will allow \$71,688 yearly, which will leave \$200,000 clear profit (about £40,000) which can be increased by putting more men and power to work. These calculations are correct, as I got all particulars off the captain of the Withers mine before mentioned.

A vessel can load in Black Bay and unload in Liver-

pool without breaking cargo, so perfect is the chain of lakes here.

As soon as you buy the land, and the deeds are signed, I will open up a few feet of the vein for show, and if you wish to mine yourselves—go on with work; if you wish to sell—I will visit the large cities in the States and place the mine before the capitalists, and sell it, without a doubt, for \$200,000 (£40,000), as there is nothing like it in this country.

As soon as I get a reply to this, I will send a box of specimens of the ore, which I *picked out myself*, besides the letters and affidavits before mentioned, or if you think it necessary, I will *myself* visit Scotland, and fetch the articles with me, so that all may have personal communication with me. I am ready to start at any time wanted.

On the other hand, if you think my testimony enough, and say you take the land (two hundred acres), I will send the name and address of the owner, and get the patents, deeds, plans, &c., on payment of the £2,000 by you; or you can choose some legal person in Montreal or Quebec to do the business for you here, I giving him the information, which I will keep a dead secret till I hear from you.

And now I have given all the information and particulars that can possibly be thought of, I beg to subscribe myself,

JOHN GWYNN SWAIN.

LETTER No. XIX.

ON STEAMSHIP "ALGONA,"
LAKE SUPERIOR, *September 9th*, 1868.

Mrs E. SWAIN, Edinburgh.

MY OWN DEAREST MOTHER,—I received your truly loving letter yesterday, just as I was leaving "Fort William." The perusal of it gave me the greatest pleasure, as I see that even after an absence of sixteen months, I am still remembered by my friends. The mail also brought me a letter from Mr M'Kie, and two from Andrew. I am glad Mr M'Kie is pleased with my epistles home, as I try my best to make them pleasant and interesting to you. I trust you have received the two *very* long letters I sent you a month back, as I know they will please. Concerning the *mining*, more anon.

Well, I am now on my way back to civilization, and have said farewell'to the woods for one season. I spent a splendid summer, full of adventure and novelty, not to mention the hard work, of which I have had more than ever I would have believed, had any one told me when at home. I have not told you all the adventures and hardships I have had, as you would only alarm yourself needlessly, and very likely a great many would not believe me, and think such things could only exist in novels. To sum up the whole, I have been stabbed by an Indian, nearly starved to death, upset in a canoe, wrecked on a steamer, and lots of minor things too numerous to mention, but which are always associated with camp life in the bush. And concerning the profit I have \$200 (£40) to draw when I get down to Sarnia.

I have made \$100 (£20) selling "amethysts" to the passengers on the steamboat. I have \$1,200 (£240) worth of "amethysts" on board with me now, which I am going to sell in New York, and if you take that mine, which I trust you will, my fortune will be made next year; if not, I shall sell my information for \$5,000 (£1,000), so, altogether, I don't think I have made a bad summer, and calculate I have rather beat several young men you held up to me as paragons of goodness and steadiness a short time ago. Had I taken Mr M'Kie's advice, and a few more I could mention (although well meant), I would have been a clerk in some office at £60 a-year; and now I have taken my own way, and worked myself up a little, I calculate to have £5,000 before Christmas. It would take me too long to explain to you the part I am taking in mining affairs, so you must wait till I come home, which will be in a couple of months I think, but can't say, as it all depends on certain business here. If you write to say I could manage that company by coming home, I will be with you in time to spend my nineteenth birthday, which is on the 19th next month. If you can do it yourself, why, I will be a little longer.

I need not ask you if you have tried your best about my discovery, as I know you would, and I hope and trust you will succeed, as it would certainly make the fortunes of all concerned. The property is worth at least \$400,000 (£80,000 sterling) and here they get a chance to buy it for £2,000. I hope Mr Cathcart will take a share, as he is a thoroughly business man, and would back me up in all I do; also the M'Kies and Mr Sturrock. When you come to think it only wants four

of them to put in £500 a-piece, it is ridiculous, and did they see the vein as I have done, they would go jumping mad, and would not know their heads from their heels. I hope to get an answer from you in a fortnight, and then I will know at once how the land lies, and if they want a personal interview I will start at once. Don't run your heads against a stone, and say I am too young &c., &c., or you will lose the greatest chance ever could happen to man. There will be a great rush here next summer, and I could sell the property right off, were it once in my hands. I enclose you a copy of report of an eminent man here on the gold on *this property* in Black Bay, which I took from a paper. I daresay Mr M'Kie can get the original at the exchange. I can't. Also a first-class article on teetotalism, the best thing ever I saw, and daresay you will say the same. I also send you a paper with my name in it, only they made a mistake, and instead of putting *M'Swain*, put *M'Shane*.

I am now on my way to Mr Donnelly's house, and then am going to the States on mining business for him. He is a splendid fellow, and thinks a great deal of me, and puts every confidence in me. He intends returning with me, as also his wife, for a visit, as he has never yet been in the old country.

I have kept my mining clothes, and am going to send or bring them home as curiosities. I shall get taken in them when I get below, and send you half a dozen. I have got a lot of most beautiful Indian work and rare stones for you, all of which I have got myself; also a lot of "mocassins" for you to wear in the house. They are splendid. You would never wear anything else, did you once get these on. I have a pair

on now, which are the admiration of all on board: they are a mass of silk work. We have a piano on board, and singing and reciting every evening; at both I take the lead, and am having a splendid time with the young ladies, as I have not been in ladies' society *since I left home*. I am glad Meyers wrote you. He is a good fellow. I am not very well at present. It is the change of food, as I have tasted nothing but *FAT pork* and flour (except fish and a little game occasionally), for *four* months, and the first-class grub we have on board the steamer has upset me a little. Excuse this letter being so shaky, but it is the boat moving. I can't keep the pen straight. I am glad you like the flowers. I sent some more in my last, also some birch-bark. It was a very long letter, and I fervently hope you got it and the one about the mine. Neither were paid, as I could not get stamps. I am sorry you bought the grate, as I don't intend you to stay in business much longer. Don't buy any more expensive things, and tell me in your next if you have anything yet to pay on No. 5; if so, how much? and how long the lease of No. 4 has yet to run? I have lots more to say, but the boat is shaking, so I can't write. You will hear from me next week. Love to everybody, the "old woman" and the Woolwich folks in particular.—Ever your devoted son,

JOHN SWAIN.

LETTER No. XX.

CARE OF J. P. DONELLY, Esq.
MOORTOWN, LAMBTON COUNTY, CANADA.

September 20th, 1868.

Mrs E. SWAIN, Edinburgh.

MY EVER DEAREST AND FONDEST MOTHER,—I received your kind and loving letter three days ago, along with one from Mr M'Kie and one from Allan. I answer them both this mail. Allan sent me a beautiful pin made out of one of his ornaments on his cap. I think a great deal of it. I also send by this mail two packages of mineral samples from my discovery, to Mr M'Kie for him to get assayed, so as to prove my assertions, and show the immense value of the vein.

So poor dear old Granny is dead ; well she has held on wonderfully. It must be a great relief to Aunt H. and Mrs B. as she was a trouble to herself and to them, being so old. Present my congratulations to Mrs Latta and Mrs Duncan. I will not forget Nelly, poor old soul, she must love me very much. My fondest love to Mrs Sturrock, and tell her I hope Mr S. will take a share in my mining company. I am very happy to hear my letters cause you all so much gratification, and that they prove to you, that though I was a spoilt boy, I could work for my living, and not afraid to work hard either. My fondest love to Aunty, and tell her not to alarm herself, for I intend her to visit this beautiful country, and that before long ; however all that I will explain when we meet. Now about myself.

Well, here I am, settled down comfortably in what I

may term my "Canadian home." We arrived here four days after I wrote that last letter to you on the steam-boat. One clever thing we did was to leave a bundle, containing our tent, blankets, mining clothes, &c., &c., on the boat that brought us down. We have not yet got them, but expect them here to-morrow. I should be sorry to lose them, as I want my *carte* taken in my working costume, also my blankets, to show you what I slept in. The first thing we did on arrival was to unpack our specimens, and then the whole town had to see them. Every one was delighted and thought them most wonderful productions of nature. I have kept some very pretty ones to bring home to you, as I know how you will value them, my having got them myself. The remainder I expect an American gentleman to buy off me for \$1,200 or £240. I will get his answer to my letter in a day or two.

This town is on the banks of the "St Clair" which joins Lake Huron and Lake Erie, and is one of the finest rivers in the world. The view from my bedroom is splendid, and there are dozens of the finest American steamers passing daily. The whole country is beautiful, and the very best for farming purposes. It is well called the "garden of Canada."

Mr Donnelly's wife welcomed me most warmly to the house, and is very kind to me. She is a most perfect lady and belongs to the best family in the country. He has four girls and one boy; a finer family I never saw. The boy is a little gem, and I want them to let him come home with me for his education. You would love him dearly I know, he is such a good child, and so well made. Mr D's house is in the town itself, but his farm

is two miles down the river. There his dear old mother lives. She was the wife of a surgeon in the Royal Navy and is eighty-two years of age. She often walks up here to see us (two miles) and is perfectly healthy. She has one of the most benign countenances I ever saw, and altogether is a dear old lady. She is devoted to Mr D's children, and though she has lots of other grandchildren, pays little attention to any of them save his. I enclose a *carte* of her taken off a daguerotype, please return it immediately, as I have only the loan of it for the time being. I have been down to the farm twice. It is a very nice one, and has a splendid orchard with over three hundred apple trees, besides peach, pear, plum, &c., &c., so you may guess what a stuffing I had. He has seven horses and a nice machine. I am out either riding or driving every day. He is by no means a *wealthy* man, but well to do in the world; and if those mines in Lake Superior turn out a success, as they must do, he will be worth, at least, half a million, as he and three others own 2400 acres of silver and lead land. I sent his *carte* to Mr McKie, which of course you will see. I think he is like Mr Sturrock, what do you say? He is a splendid fellow. He keeps a good house. His friends are all the first people in the country, and he is looked up to, and respected by all. He has been a magistrate since he was twenty-four, so that tells you what kind of a man he is. His brother was one of the finest and cleverest men Canada ever produced. He was shot by accident, three years ago, up the lake; his gun went off in the boat, and the whole charge entered his right lung. It was a terrible thing, as his wife and family, Mr Donnelly and his wife and family, were all in the boat at

at the time. They have his picture hanging up in the parlour, and a finer and nobler looking head, I never saw on man. His widow and family occupy part of this house.

One day last week I was at a "hop picking," here, the first that has been in this part of the country. I had lots of fun. There were over a hundred girls and young men there. We picked all day, and danced till two in the morning. The field looked splendid, and the hops are very fine. I enclose you a bunch. The picking will take a fortnight. We are going down again in a day or two. It is the farm of Mr D.'s brother-in-law.

I have been introduced to lots of first-class people here, and have received great kindness from all, so I am enjoying myself to my heart's content.

The church is only a few yards from me, and I went twice last Sunday, and once to-day, to make up for my long absence. It is a neat church, and a good minister, but nothing very grand.

And now, my dear mother, to the main point: about this silver and lead mine. I think I have perfectly satisfied Mr M'Kie on the subject, and am certain the specimens will assay far beyond their most sanguine expectations; so have no doubt but you will see your son the head of a splendid mining company before his nineteenth birthday, if all goes on well, and they send the money soon. You will once more clasp me in your arms before two months are over. Oh! my dearest mother, the bliss of that moment will be unutterable, for you know not how my heart craves to see you all once more. I shall never leave you again; but you must come back with me, and see this lovely country that has

built your boy up so high. You have worked long enough for me; and if they take this land, as I know they will do, I am determined you shall leave business this coming spring. I will have you harassed no more, but will show the world I can fight for myself, and though not twenty, can keep my mother as she ought to be kept, and like a lady. My ambition soars high, and I mean to show every one what a boy can do if he has the brains and the will. I will not rest till I am possessed of a large sum of money, for that is the key-stone of this world. People may say as they choose, but a bitter and hard experience has taught me the truth of it. When a man is poor the world will keep him poor, and will kick him like a dog; but if he is rich they will cringe and fawn upon him, and everything is at his command, save health and the world to come. You may think this rather curious talk for a boy of my age, but mother, since I left your side, I have gained a vast deal of experience, and now know full well what a cold and cruel world we live in. I have met lots I would not designate by the name of "man," and often wonder how the Lord in all his goodness could permit such reptiles to pollute the face of this lovely world. Go into the back woods where the hand of man has never been, and there all is beauty, harmony, and peace, and you feel the presence of your Maker in all around you; enter the city, and what a different scene do we behold: there is selfishness, cruelty, hard-heartedness, and all the works of the devil brought fully before the senses, and you say to yourself, "surely there is no Lord here."

My poor old dog "Jerry" is now settled down quietly to end his days in peace. The children all play with him,

and he is so good to them, lets them on his back, or pull him about as they choose. I thought I had lost him just before we left Fort William, as a stone we had in the fire in lieu of a "Dog Iron," broke with the heat, and a piece struck him on the forehead: however, I doctored him and attended him, as you know I love to do when a dog is in the question, and now he is all well, save a bald spot on the head.

If you pass "Marshall & Aitken" call in and give my kindest regards to young Aitken, and tell him I am coming home, and will give him a tremendous big order, as I shall fetch none of these beastly Canadian clothes home with me, and will only be too glad to feel once more I have their goods on my back; also tell him that *now* the bills are to be made out to *Mr* Swain and *not* "*Mrs.*," as after this I pay all my own accounts, though still a minor.

I am nearly crazy at the thought that so soon I may be among you all. The thought of seeing you all once more, and dear Freddy, and the Serjeant-Major, not to speak of numerous friends and outsiders, and all the parties and balls I may be at this winter, after my wandering, is almost too much for me; and Mr D. declares I will be into a brain fever. One thing is certain, you shall never know the day I am coming, as the surprise will be the beauty of it. Fancy my coming in and finding you in the kitchen amongst all the dinners, &c. I pity the dishes, for I am sure I should break all within my reach, and knock the old cook into the dripping-pan for a finale.

I am very sorry Mr Brown has been so ill. Give him my fondest love, and tell him I hope soon to take a

pinch of snuff out of his box, and a glass of my favourite "Vino de pasto" in the cellars of J. C. F. & Co.; also ask him to give my fondest regards to the "Quarry holes" people.

Mr McKie tells me Aunt H. has been paying you a visit, give her my fondest love, and also to Mrs Baldwin.

I suppose Freddy is very glad to hear of my good luck. I will write him this mail or next.

Have the "Andrews" visited you yet?

I expect to go to "Detroit" and "New York" soon on business, so will see those two fine cities of the United States.

You shall not want for letters now, as I have lots of time, and not like Fort William, close to the P. O., and a mail twice a week.

Write back *immediately*, and tell me what you think of the specimens; inclose the carte of Mr D., and tell me all about the mining business.

Now, my dearest mother, I must close up. Accept my fondest love and prayer for your welfare and safe keeping.—And believe me your devoted son,

JOHN SWAIN.

If any one wants a commission done here, let me know, as I may leave in six weeks; it depends on Mr McKie. I shall be most happy to oblige anyone here or in the States.

LETTER No. XXI.

October 21st, 1868.

Mrs E. SWAIN, Edinburgh.

MY OWN DEAREST MOTHER,—I received your kind and loving letter some time ago, and hope you will forgive my not writing before this, as I have been travelling about a great deal, and never had an opportunity till now.

I received Mr M'Kie's telegraph on the 9th inst., and that pleased me very much, as it at once removed all fear of their not purchasing. I immediately gave my note for thirty days to the owner of the property, so as to avoid all chance of a bungle at the last moment; and am now anxiously waiting for the draft, which I expect will get here to-morrow or next day at farthest.

You all seem very anxious for me not to come home this winter, and seem all to think it would damage my prospects, &c. Perhaps some of you will kindly allow *me* to be the best judge of my own business and private matters, seeing that none of you know anything at all about them, consequently are unable to advise.

I suppose the specimens gave the highest satisfaction. I expect a whole package of letters from you all this week, and will then see all about it.

My birthday was on Monday: only fancy nineteen, and now in my twentieth year. It seems but yesterday that I left school, and was so proud to go into the office of J. C. F. & Co.; and here I am, three thousand miles from home, and getting on as no boy my age ever got on before. Mr Donnelly gave me a champagne and oyster supper in honour of the occasion; and all the girls beat me, and then gave me five kisses each,—that is the custom here.

I was down at the hop-picking twice since the last time I wrote, have been to three county fairs, lots of dinner parties, dancing parties, &c. ; so you see I have been very gay.

Since my last I have visited Toronto, Detroit, New York, and several smaller places. It would take me too long to describe New York or Detroit to you at present, so you must wait till some future occasion.

I send you a paper this mail with my specimens mentioned in it. I sold them for £135, but kept some of the finest for you. They took the city by storm. No person had ever seen anything like them before.

I have a great deal to say on your "house" question, but have not time to spare to-day. I will give you my full views on the matter shortly.

Mr Donnelly has been very ill with a severe attack of bronchitis, but is better now. We have had splendid weather up to yesterday and to-day. Now it is raining heavily. We had a light fall of snow last week, and the pumps were frozen up, but it did not last.

I intend visiting the "Falls of Niagara" next week ; am also going to Toronto and New York again on business.

My dog "Jerry" gets fonder of me every day, and wont leave my side for a moment. He sleeps at my door every night, and if he thinks it is time for me to get up he scratches at the door, and yelps, till I let him in. When I go away he is miserable. The children are very fond of him, and he lets them pull him about just as they please.

I went out deer shooting the other day, and shot two fine bucks in high condition ; also went duck shooting

in the St Clair flats, and killed forty-five birds, all of which "Jerry" brought in.

The fruit is all done now except the apples; but I have had *peaches* and *cream* almost every day this last three weeks. Don't you wish you were here. Only fancy they feed the pigs on them.

I am more enchanted with this place every week I stay. It would please you mighty I know; and there are a splendid set of people live here too. The hospitality I have met with is unsurpassable. Each one seems to vie with the other who will treat me most kindly.

There are lots of nice young ladies here, so you may fancy I am in my element; but I have no intention of making a fool of myself, or being made a fool of, *twice* in my lifetime.

I have a good deal to say to you on business matters, but will defer it till another time, as I have a good deal of correspondence to do this morning, and I want this letter to get Saturday's mail.

I am sure you are proud and happy at this property being now in our hands, as now I am a fifth owner, and of some standing in the world, and expect to be worth several thousands next spring or summer; in fact, my prospects are excellent in every respect.

Give my fondest love to the "old woman," Aunt H., and Mr B., also Mr M'Kie and all friends.—And believe me, my dearest mother, your ever devoted and loving son.

JOHN SWAIN.

P.S.—You will hear again from me soon. I will telegraph the moment the money arrives. (Isn't that Irish? as of course you will have got the telegraph long before this letter.)

EXCERPT FROM NEWSPAPER.

"A VALUABLE CABINET OF RARE MINERALS.

"In the window of M. S. Smith & Co. are to be seen a portion of a fine cabinet of minerals, valued at three hundred and eighty dollars, containing an amethyst weighting forty-five pounds, washed with gold pyrites, valued at one hundred dollars, a purple and a pink amethyst, specimens of dog-tooth spar and spar combined with pyrites, and others streaked with iceland moss, etc., in all over two dozen large specimens which were collected by J. G. Swain, an explorer who spent much time and money in gathering them. The owner, who resides at Windsor, is obliged to sell them, and has determined to dispose of them by lottery. One hundred tickets will be sold at three dollars each. The drawing will take place at the Hirons House, Windsor, on the 10th inst., at 10 o'clock a.m. Purchasers not present will be represented by E. Viger, of the firm of Viger & Brothers. Tickets can be purchased of Capt. Forbes and Capt. Jenkins, of the ferry steamers *Argo* and *Essex*."

LETTER No. XXII.

DETROIT, *November 22d*, 1868.

MY OWN DEAREST MOTHER,—I received your kind letter two days ago, and merely write this note to tell you something I did not intend you to know, but you write as if you were not in the best of health, and consequently I think it better not to surprise you. I am now on my way home, and God willing, will be with you before Christmas. I have intended all along to visit you this winter and was only waiting for the completion of Mr

M'Kie's business to start; that being done, I am now wending my way once again to your arms. I leave here to-morrow for "Cincinnati," a city in the state of "Ohio," to transact a little money business, and then I go to New York for the first "Cunard" boat that leaves. I cannot say definitely when you will see me, but depend on it, I will take you to church on Christmas morning, and a prouder boy will not walk over the Dean Bridge on that morning.

I wrote Mr M'Kie and yourself by last week's mail, when I was in Toronto.

You will oblige me by *not* letting Allan know of my return, as if I can't surprise you I must surprise *somebody*, also Freddy, *on no account breathe a word to him, or I shall be much disappointed.*

Mr Donnelly's health necessitates a change of climate, so he is going south, down to "Alabama." He is with me now. He intends staying all winter.

Snow and frost have begun in Canada, and it was snapping cold the morning I left.

I am in a deuce of a stew just now, as I am afraid I have lost a box with all my Indian curiosities in it. If so, it will be a great pity, as I had over £20 worth; but I hope it will turn up.

I need not write you a long letter, as in a few weeks I will tell you all verbatim.

Hurrah for Topsy!

Love to aunty.—Your ever devoted son,

JOHN SWAIN.

Don't give Topsy's pup away.